

SELECT
SENTENCES

DIVINE and HUMANE,

Collected From

The most Orthodox DIVINES,
and the best MORALISTS,
Ancient and Modern.

Publish'd for the Improvement of
Piety and Vertue.

*The Preacher sought to find out acceptable
Words, and that which was written was
Upright, even Words of Truth, Eccles.
xii. 10.*

— *By these my Son be admonished, v. 12.*

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SELECT

SENTENCES

Divine and Human

Collected

From the Old Testament
and the New Testament
Ancient and Modern

The Preface.

I Shall not give you the Trouble of a tedious Preface to this short Collection? 'Twill be sufficient to acquaint you, that 'twas extracted, in the Course of many years Reading, from several Orthodox Divines, and Eminent Philosophers. Thro' the whole Performance may be discover'd, a happy Force and Spirit; Thoughts truly elevated and bold, with a noble Turn of Expression. It gave me much Satisfaction in Manuscript, and to make the Advantage more Diffusive, I am willing it should appear in Print.

The Preface

I have given you the trouble
of a tedious Preface to this short
little book. I am sensible that
you must have been tired, and
that the length of many years Reading
from sacred Orthodox Divines, and
the weight of the subject, have made
the Preface very tedious, and
I am sure you will excuse me
for being so long and slow. I have
been so long and slow, with a
view to the Exposition. It is
a much more tedious subject, and
I am sure the advantage of
the subject is not to be lost.
I am writing it for
you to read.

INTRODUCTION.

Be pleased, O Eternal God, to give Force and Efficacy to this Performance, in Order to the furthering that one needful, that one great Work of our everlasting Salvation.

I. **G**reat Numbers of Books of Devotion are necessary to suit with the Palates and Capacities of the Multitude of Readers; those are most Useful, that are agreeable to the several Genius of devout Persons. No Book is more fatally destructive than that which fails not to Convince, and yet doth not Reform.

II. The best Commendation we can bestow on a good Book, is immediately to put it in Practice, otherwise we become Self-condemn'd, our Judgment reproaches our Actions, and we live a Contradiction to our selves.

St. Anselm. Draw me, O Lord, that I may run after thee; fasten me with the Cords of thy Love; and as I am already upon so many accounts thine own, so make me thine own also by Inclination and Affection; the very Desire of obtaining is thy Gift; O let me obtain what thou hast made me desire!

F A I T H.

I. **T**HE Christian Faith hath two sorts of Enemies, those who deny all, and those who would know all.

II. An Intemperate Curiosity that rudely rushes upon a Mystery without any Reverence to its awful Retirements, has done near as much mischief to Christianity, as Infidelity it self.

III. What Deference do we pay to God more than Man, if either we suppose that he cannot reveal Truths to us, which we cannot comprehend, or if we will not receive them, if he does.

IV. The Arrogance of some would bring all the Mysteries of the Gospel down to the Level of humane Conceptions; yet these Men, if asked of almost every thing in Nature, which they look upon, how it is so, must own their Ignorance. Is it not then a strange piece of Obstinacy, when baffled in ten thousand Things which they see, they should deny these Spiritual Mysteries, meerly because they

they cannot comprehend how they should be? May not God exceed our Understanding in Things relating to Heaven, as much as in Things belonging to Earth?

V. The History of the Bible exceeds all others; those shew the Rise and Progress of some one People or Empire, this shews the Original of the whole Universe, and particular of Man, for whose Use the whole Creation was design'd: By this Mankind is brought into Acquaintance with it self, made to know the Elements of his Constitution, and ought to put a differing Value upon the Spirit, which was breath'd into it by God, *Gen. 2. 7.* and the Flesh, whose Foundation is in the Dust, *Job 4. 19.*

VI. We have a stranger, and more uncontroll'd Tradition of the Truth of the Gospel, than of any History in the whole World be- sides.

VII. They that believe that Christianity could make so great, and so swift a Progress, as it certainly did, only by the Preaching of the Apostles, without any miraculous Gifts, or supernatural Assistances, want not Faith enough to be Christians, had they but a Will to it; for they believe already a much greater Miracle than any is recorded in the Evangelical Story.

Remove, O Lord, all Prejudices from our Minds, and present the Evidences of our Religion

ligion to our Understanding in a clear and convincing Light.

VIII. 2 Cor. 5. 7. We walk by Faith, not by Sight; we ought to live, and order our Conversation, not by what we see in this World; but by what we believe and expect in the next. Nothing is more certain than that the general way of the World is quite opposite to this Apostolical Maxim, indeed the very Reverse to it.

IX. What a Faith is that, that will not make us despise our selves, not awe an Eye, bind a Hand, silence a Word, stifle a Thought?

X. O the unaccountable Folly and Madness of a wicked Life, when 'tis join'd with a good Faith! Why do they not either renounce their Faith, or take more care of their Works!

XI. They who believe and do not obey, shall receive the Reward of Presumption not of Faith.

St. Augustin. Grant, Lord, that my Understanding may apprehend thee, my Will choose thee, my Memory retain and meditate upon thee, and my whole Heart cleave to thee, with an immoveable Stedfastness.

XII. What are we the better that a Saviour is born to us, if he be not formed in us, and dwell not in our Hearts by Faith? Was it not for this End that he took our Nature,

that

that he might purifie it, and make us reverence our selves more than to defile that which is so near of kin to the Son of God ? They that hear, and believe his Word, conceive him in their Hearts ; and they that do it, bring him forth in their Lives.

XIII. Some are very willing to think, that since their own Righteousness is not to be rely'd upon, but Christ's Merits alone ; therefore if they do but believe, 'tis no great Matter how they live.

XIV. Surely unless the Enemy of God and all Goodness be taken into Consultation, it can never be thought that when Mankind was miserable by Sin, Christ Jesus should shed his most precious Blood to this End, that we might without Fear and Danger commit Sin.

XV. We should consider that the not relying on our own Righteousness doth suppose, that Righteousness there must be, on which we must not rely, and that we should be as careful to practise it as we are forward not to rely upon it.

XVI. The greatest Benefit of Faith is this, that instead of perfect Obedience, our sincere Endeavours shall be accepted, and where these are, what Defects soever there be in us, shall all be made up by the Merits of Christ, who is our Righteousness.

XVII. Faith, though but a single Word, is highly Comprehensive, and includeth mighty Things in it, it implieth a closing with the Will of God, a courageous asserting our Religion against all Opposition, an unfeigned Love both to God and Man, a deep Sense of our Unworthiness, and an Acknowledgment of owing all to the Divine Bounty.

XVIII. Who then can think that if they do but believe 'tis no matter how they live; from which of all those Actions (which make up the very being of Faith) is there so much as the least Countenance to a loose Conversation?

XIX. Nothing dishonours God more than Unbelief; if you do not believe, why do you pray? And, if you believe, why do you not expect?

XX. Exercise your Faith, if you mean to preserve it; for Faith lives by Exercise.

XXI. Faith is a quieting Grace, it stills the Soul; being justified by Faith we have Peace with God.

XXII. Faith triumphs over all seeming Contradictions, looks upon the greatest Impediments, that cannot check, but only magnifie Almightyness.

XXIII. Our Faith must have an equal regard to the Threats, as well as the Promises; which we have no right to, unless we perform the Conditions.

XXIV.

XXIV. Saving Faith is known by the Consequences, as Life by Motion, and Fire by Heat, it still covets more and more earnestly, the Favour of God.

XXV. *Grotius* says, God did not intend that Christian Religion should have the utmost Evidence any thing is capable of, but there's abundantly sufficient to satisfy any sober Person: Were it as glaring and evident as the Sun shining at Noon-Day, where would be the Vertue of Faith, Infidelity would be next to impossible.

PRACTICE.

I. **W**E must not pretend to the promised Land without going thorow the Wilderness; grasp at the Prize, and decline the Combat.

II. The Conduct of our Lives is the only Proof of the Sincerity of our Hearts. *1 Cor. 9. 24. So run, that ye may obtain.* The true Christian, saith *St. Bernard*, sets no Bounds to his Vertue, nor ever thinks he hath done enough: Whereas the Presumptuous are perfectly content with themselves, and in their supposed Safety lies their greatest Danger.

III. The great Errand of our coming into this World, is to prepare our selves for a better.

IV. We must conclude that every Action is good or bad, wise or foolish, as it promotes or hinders our Happiness in the Life to come.

V. It is as dangerous to be wilfully Ignorant, as to disobey; for, since we are reasonable Creatures, we are as much bound to know our Duty, as we are to practise it.

VI. We have more Laziness in our Minds than in our Bodies.

VII. God encourages us to be Good by glorious Promises; and deters us from ill by amazing Threats.

VIII. Our Abilities to obey the Gospel are not to be measured by the Strength of Nature, but by the Spirit of God.

IX. The great Design of Religion is to raise our Hearts upwards, and to make us Spiritually-minded.

X. We are apt to do what we see others do, rather than what we ought to do our selves.

XI. We should place our Religion in submitting our Wills to the Will of God, imitating the Life of Christ, minding the Faults of our Nature, and subduing our Passions.

XII. *St. Austin.* God does not despise, nor forsake any but such only as lost to all Sense of their own Duty and Happiness, do first despise and forsake him.

St. Au-

St. Austin. O Lord, wean my Affections from Things below, and let them be eager and fix'd upon Heaven and heavenly Things.

XIII. The Primitive Christians excell'd us in Goodness, as much as we do them in Learning and Knowledge, and were better without those Advantages than we are with them.

XIV. How poor a Consideration is it for Christians, that they have been refin'd into Civility and good Manners? How little and insignificant are all these Polishings in comparison of those Benefits which come from Obedience, and having our Minds exalted, so as to have a true Taste of Good and Evil?

XV. We may be happy without Riches, happy without Honour and Applause; but none can be happy without Grace and Goodness.

XVI. Our great Fault is, we enjoy what we should only use, and we only use what we should enjoy.

XVII. 'Tis with Virtues as 'tis in Arts, we get them by Practice; and what we do, we learn by doing.

XVIII. If we are more earnest after the Pleasures and Profits of Earth, than to obtain Heaven, 'tis certain we are Hypocrites.

XIX. We have a great Work on our Hands, the Promises to believe, the Commands to obey; Temptations to resist, Passions to conquer; and this must be done or we are undone.

XX. The old Proverb is true in Religion; as good never a whit, as never the better.

Give us, O Lord, Courage, Favour and Fidelity in thy Service the few remaining Moments of our wretched and wearisome Pilgrimage.

XXI. The greatest Enemies to Religion are those that profess it, and live unanswerable to it.

XXII. There's no such miserable Person in the World as a degenerate Christian.

XXIII. To desire and resolve to reform our Lives, and yet do it not, these Desires are of Account with God, yet some rest in it; but we are not apt to mistake so grossly in other Matters; none believe Hunger to be Meat, nor Thirst to be Drink, though we cannot doubt of the Truth and Sincerity of those Desires.

XXIV. I know not how it is, but either we or the Things of this World, or both are so Fantastical, that we can neither be well with, nor without them; if we are hungry, we are in Pain; if we eat to the full, we are Uneasie; if we are Poor, we think our selves
Miserable.

Miserable; and when we come to be Rich, we commonly really are so.

XXV. Let us remember we are hastning apace to another World, and that this Life is our Time for Preparation; our Souls will continue for ever what we make them here; such a Disposition and Temper of Mind we carry out of this, such shall we retain in the next.

Make me, O Lord, every Day to draw nearer and nearer in the Disposition and Temper of my Spirit to thy immortal Blessedness.

XXVI. St. Bernard. Let it not be our Reproach, to be careless and indifferent in the weightiest Affairs; they that make it the constant Subject of their Meditations, that pray without ceasing, and strive without Laziness or Intermission, will go securely out of this World, and be received in the next with Joy and Satisfaction unspeakable.

XXVII. St. Anselm. Truth it self hath declared, that not only evil Fruit, but no Fruit at all, not only the corrupt, but barren Tree, shall be condemned to everlasting Flames; for such is the Importance of that saying, Mat. 7. 17.

Make me, O my God, think on thee more frequently, desire thee more passionately, and obey thee more universally.

XXVIII. Seneca. A troublesome Life is much to be preferred before a sloathful one.

XXIX.

XXVIII. *Seneca.* Every Man has much business within himself, as a Physician in a common Pestilence.

XXIX. *Emp. Antoninus.* It concerns us to push forward, Life is but short, therefore make the most on't; and keep to your own Business; Rambling and Impertinence is not to be endured.

O Lord, suffer not our Practice and our Profession to be at so wide a Distance; let us not be out-done by Heathens, but make us Christians indeed as well as in Name.

XXX. The more we consider our Transgressions, the more we shall abhor them, and the less will be the Danger of a Relapse; frequent Reflection is the readiest way to a Reformation. In the Way of Vertue there's no standing at a stay, they that do not daily advance lose Ground. It is an abominable Thing to belie the Truth, even in Words, but the Lie of Life is the most Pernicious of all others.

XXXI. They that have no hungering and thirsting after Righteousness are dead in God's Account, and deserve to have the Motto of the Plague writ on them.

XXXII. We ought not to judge the Merit of Men by their Qualities, but by the Use they make of them.

XXXIII. They who live carelessly cannot be Peaceable, there's no Protection against Fear
but

but Innocency; *a good Man is satisfied from himself*, Prov. 14. 14.

XXXIV. Some choose to bury their Talents, rather than be at the trouble to employ them.

XXXV. People do not love to hear of what they have no mind to practise, nor to believe that a necessary Duty, which they care not to perform.

XXXVI. Every Christian hath Assistances sufficient to support him, so that without his own yielding, no Temptation is stronger than the Grace God offers him; if it were, it were not so much as a sin of Infirmary, it were no sin at all.

XXXVII. God hath taken off all Objections Men are apt to make against Obedience to the Laws of Christ; the Pretence of Ignorance, because they are so clear; the Pretence of Impossibility, by his own Example; the Pretence of Infirmary, by the Assistance of his Grace; the Pretence of the Unnecessariness of so great Care, by making eternal Rewards and Punishments depend upon it.

XXXVIII. As our Faith is imperfect, if it be not equal to the Truths which are revealed, so is our Obedience imperfect, when it is not equal to the Commands, and so both are unavailable.

XXXIX. What an unhappy Age is this, that we cannot know Men to be Christians, unless

unless we will believe their Words, against the Tenour and Course of their Actions

XL. Let us every Day make some Progress in our way to Heaven.

XLI. Without striving still to go forward, our Pains will be to no Purpose; we do, and undo, dance round in an eternal Circle of sinning, and resolving against it, resolving and sinning again.

XLII. We must consider our Progress in Religion lies up Hill, and our Apostasie down, and we descend much faster than we ascend.

XLIII. We must either conquer or perish, the Matter will admit of no Debate; when a Ship has sprung a Leak, 'twould be Madness for the Mariners to sit still, and complain of the Labour of Pumping; they must pump or perish.

XLIV. To do our Duties every Day with greater Fervency is the right way to Perfection; a few Things well done profit more than heaps of Works done negligently.

XLVI. Nothing more recommends Religion than the Influence it hath upon the Practice of them that profess it.

XLVII. By Singleness of Heart is meant, that God should be the only Object of our Love, and Thoughts, and that we be not Double minded.

XLVIII. We should prefer our Duty before all other Considerations, and remember that
Chri-

Christians are to walk by Faith, not by Sight, by Precepts, not by Example.

XLVIII. We may as soon wish our selves into Wealth and Honour, as into Grace and Comfort without striving and labouring after it.

XLIX. God's Will is as well in little as in great Things, and who is careless in small Matters, will soon fail in higher.

L. Exercise is as necessary for the Soul, as for the Body ; Idleness breeds Diseases in both.

HOLY SCRIPTURES.

I. **I**N the Scriptures the Ignorant may learn all requisite Knowledge, and the most Knowing may learn to discern their Ignorance.

II. *Luther* wish'd all his Books of Devotion were burnt, when he perceived the People's Fondness and over-Valuation of them, made them neglect the Bible.

III. Christians should not leave the Fountain for the Streams, and, as unwisely, as unthankfully, choose to read God's Word rather in any Book than his own.

IV. God's Word is compar'd to Seed, that Deathless Seed as *St. Peter* saith, by which we are born again.

V. The best Christians have the greatest Appetites and keenest Stomachs to this Food

of the Soul, and the most vigorous Appetites, by Difuse and Neglect of it, are subject to faint and pine away.

VI. In Diseases Bodily and Spiritual, tho' the Mouth be out of taste, and cannot relish what is taken; yet wholsom Food will nourish and strengthen, tho' it seems insipid (perhaps bitter) to the distemper'd Palate.

VII. We may confidently expect God's Blessing on his own Institutions, and we cannot ask any Thing more agreeable to his Will, than a Competent Understanding of the Book wherein his Will is contain'd.

VIII. Some prophetick Parts of Scripture may probably respect future Times, and our Posterity may admire what we cannot relish.

IX. Those Passages that are so obscure as to teach us nothing else, may at least teach us Humility: 'Tis our Duty to study them, but 'tis not always to understand them.

X. The differing Notions several sorts of Men (especially of distant Nations and Climates) have of Eloquence, may make many Passages, that are thought Uneloquent by us, appear excellently express'd to another Part of Mankind. The Dress of our Thoughts, like the Dress of our Bodies, differs not only in several Regions, but in several Ages; and what sometimes may make a Man look like a Courtier, in a few Years may make him like an Antick.

XI.

XI. 'Tis no wonder wicked Men find fault with a Book, that finds so much fault with them.

XII. In those Ages of more immediate Illumination, the God of this World found Instruments, whereby to blind Mens Minds, 2 Cor. 4. 4. It cannot be supposed impossible, or improbable he should do so now.

XIII. To those who except to the Stile, the Incoherence, the Contradictions, or what else in Scripture, I shall only ask this one Question, whether it be not much more probable, that they (who can pretend to be nothing above fallible Men) may misjudge, than that the infallible God should dictate any thing justly liable to those Charges?

XIV. 'Tis certain that in a writing of such Antiquity, whose original Language has Phrases so peculiar, whose Country had Customs so different from the rest of the World, 'tis impossible to judge without reference to all those Circumstances.

XV. St. *Augustine* saith, I delight in the Holy Scriptures, I lay them up in my Memory as a most valuable Treasure, and by tasting and feeding upon those delicious Descriptions of another World, I take off great part of the Bitterness and Nauseousness of this.

XVI. That sacred Book (like the common Air) is every Man's Property, but no Man's Enclosure.

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XVII.

XVII. Some are so bold and daring, as to judge that Book, by which they must be judged.

XVIII. Some, who own it as God's Word, and profess they must stand or fall by its Verdict, yet in their merry Humours make light and irreverent Applications of its Phrases and Sentences, and furnish out their little Jest in its attire.

XIX. But sure there cannot be two Things more inconsistent than the avowing it to be dictated by God in order to the most important Concern of Man, and yet debase it to the vilest Purposes. O consider what a Reckoning will be for such Divertisements! That that Word, which set Heathen *Felix* a trembling, should set Christians a laughing!

XX. Let every one take heed of setting so much as one step in this fatal Circle, and abstain from every Appearance of a Contempt of the Holy Scriptures, and Discountenance that Insolence in others.

XXI. God knows, we are naturally too apt to have slight and easie Apprehensions of sacred Things, and had need to use all Arts and Instruments to impress an Awe upon our Minds.

XXII. A Christian may possibly find higher Satisfaction in persuading Men to pay Praises to the Scripture, than to receive them from all the World besides.

XXIII. All the Parts of it are useful in some Ages, and some in all; were we as disposed to learn, as that Matchless Book is to teach.

XXIV. *Tertullian* saith, We feed our Faith, raise our Hopes, and establish our Reliance with the sacred Word.

XXV. *Origen* saith, Would to God we did all Practise what is written: Search the Scriptures; *it is to make us wise unto Salvation*, 2 Tim. 3. 15. the most obliging Design that 'tis possible for the Creator to have upon the Creature.

XXVI. Let it be our Care, whenever we take the Bible in our Hands to invoke the Divine Aid, and dart up at least a hearty Ejaculation, that we may find its Effects in our Hearts.

XXVII. Attention is so indispensably requisite, that without it all Books are alike, and all equally Insignificant. Unattentiveness forestals all Possibility of Good: How should that convince the Understanding, or persuade the Affections, which does not so much as enter the Imagination? So that in this Case, the Seed seems more cast away, than in any of those Instances the Parable gives, *Mat. 13.*

XXVIII. *St. Chrysostom.* If there be any greater Sin than that of not reading the Scriptures, it is this, to be persuaded that we need not read them.

XXIX. *St. Chrysostom.* What sensible Food is to the increase of bodily Strength, that the reading of the Scripture is to the Soul; it is a spiritual Nourishment.

XXX. *St. Chrysostom.* None ought to neglect reading because they are Men of Business; for they that live in the World, being most exposed to Danger, have most need of Medicines.

XXXI. *St. Chrysostom.* 'Tis impossible that he should be neglected by God, who with earnest Diligence and fervent Desires, employs himself in these Divine Things; the Lord himself will enlighten our Minds, and shine into our Understandings, reveal those Things wherein we are ignorant, provided we will contribute all that lies in us to the Business.

XXXII. *St. Basil.* Let us obey our Lord, who saith, *search the Scriptures.*

XXXIII. *St. Hierom.* Read the Scriptures perpetually, that we may do the Things contain'd therein.

XXXIV. He that covets to know God's Will for any Purpose but to practise it, is only studious to entitle himself to the greater Number of Stripes, *Luke 12. 47.*

O gracious God, I praise and thank thee for the Enjoyments and Comforts of thy Word: Grant, I beseech thee, that all those Methods of thy Wisdom may have their proper Efficacy upon my Soul.

PRAYER.

P R A Y E R.

I. **M**otives to move us to the Duty of Prayer are these; our Sins are many, our Strength little, our selves nothing, our Dangers great, the same with the Disciples in the Storm, when they cry'd out, *Master save us, or else we perish.*

II. Where there is no Prayer there is no Vertue, and consequently no Salvation.

III. We all know there's no Possibility of living as our Religion requires without the Grace of God, and the Assistance of his Holy Spirit; and these are no way to be come by, but by earnest, affectionate and constant Prayer.

IV. That we may pray fervently, we must be sure to pray Affectionately, be careful never to speak a Lye in your Prayer, as careless Persons sometimes do, by professing Sorrow for their Sins which they have not.

V. There can hardly be a greater piece of Irreverence than to approach God by a bodily Movement, when our Spirits are absent; this is the worst way of taking God's Name in vain, because we do it under a Pretence of worshipping him.

VI. *St. Bernard.* Can there be any greater Perverseness, greater Insolence, greater Madnes, than to let our Minds run after Trifles and Impertinences, when we take upon us to

converse with the Majesty of Heaven and Earth in Prayer?

VII. Habitual Prayer is the Perfection of Devotion, and the truest Mark of a Heart thoroughly warm'd and animated with the Spirit of Piety.

VIII. These Prayers of the Mind *Tertulian* calls them Prayers without a Train or Retinue of Words.

IX. When we beg pardon for Sins, we must resolve to forsake them, and solicit God's Favour upon such Terms as he has promised to grant it; our Hearts and Lives must be answerable to our Prayers.

X. We must ask, before it shall be given, and we must seek before we shall find, and we must knock before it ever will be opened unto us.

XI. Unless our Spirits are mortified, we can neither love to pray, nor God love to hear us.

Grant, Lord, that we may, as we ought, beg for what we want, and thankfully adore thee for those Blessings we receive.

XII. If we don't pray heartily, and endeavour with all our might we shall not succeed, and 'tis as good not at all as not to the Purpose.

XIII. *St. Bernard.* How little soever the mistaken and vitiated Palates of the World may relish these Things, there is not in this
Life

Life any Delight so sweet, any that so effectually exalts us above the Dross and Dotage of this World and its Vanities, as the Grace of fervent Prayer and devout Contemplation.

XIV. A constrain'd Obedience is nothing worth; he that prays faintly begs a Denial.

XV. God requires only that we should seek after him, whatever else is wanting we may be well without it; Life it self is not necessary, and if not Life, much less lesser Enjoyments.

XVI. The best of Christians Want our Prayers that they may persevere; for such is our Weakness, and such the Strength of our Enemies, that none can be secure in this World.

XVII. The main Cause of that Disgust Men have to this Spiritual Entercourse, is their Unaccustomedness to it.

XVIII. 'Tis great Injustice to defame that as unpleasant, which becomes so only by our own ill-managery.

XIX. All agree that God is the Center of Felicity, but they give themselves the Lie that do not confess, that the more we converse with him, the nearer approaches we make to Happiness.

XX. 'Tis want of Devotion, not of Time which keeps Men from frequent Prayer.

XXI. We pray not at all, if our Tongues repeat what our Minds do not regard.

XXII.

XXII. We constantly depend upon God's Providence, and continually need his Mercies, so that 'tis our Stupidity and Unsensibleness of our Condition makes us so dull and unaffected at our Prayers.

Lord's Supper.

I. **S**aint Luke 22. 19. *Do this in remembrance of me* is not only a Permission, but an Injunction: 'Tis our Duty as well as our Benefit to receive Christ.

II. There is a Punishment annexed to the Neglect, as well as ill Performance of it; he that eats irreverently is guilty of profaning the Lord's Body, and he that eats not, of despising it.

III. Christ crucified is, as the Cause of our new Birth, so the Food which sustains and preserves us in it.

IV. It cannot be that the Sacrament should be undervalued by frequent Repetitions, without great Unworthiness in the Communicant; for he that receives Worthily increases in the Love of God and Religion.

V. Wicked Wretches receive nothing but the Carcass of the Ordinance, the Bread without the Body, the Wine without the Blood, both without the Blessing; the Elements, but not the Sacrament.

VI. But if we avoid, hate, and have no Fondness of Affection for our Sins, then Christ invites us to his Supper.

VII.

VII. The unavoidable Infirmities of our Lives (amongst which we daily strive, and for which we have no Kindness) are not Spots in these Feasts of Charity, but Instruments of Humility, and stronger Invitations to come for Growth in the Inner Man.

VIII. *St. Augustine.* The Soul that's pure or groans to be so, such a Soul is a fit Virgin for the Holy Ghost to over-shadow, and to conceive and receive her Saviour.

IX. Frequent Communion is as necessary for our Spiritual Growth, and increase in Holiness, as Bread is to keep our Bodies in constant repair.

L O R D's D A Y.

I. *Saint Austin.* The Commandments are so well known, and so often expounded (the Fourth especially) that we rather want Hearts to practise, than Heads to understand them.

II. 'Tis just with God to make their Six-Days Work unprosperous, who intrench upon his Day in spending it in any thing but his Service.

III. The *Jews* keep the Sabbath in honour of the World's Creation; but Christians in memorial of a higher Mercy, its Redemption.

IV. The Duties consist principally in two Things, a Rest from Labour, and a Sanctification

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cation

cation of that Rest to improve in Spirituals.

V. It must be a double Sabbath, from Labour and from Sin; but they transgress both, who imploy Man and Beast on that Day, and spend it idly and vainly themselves.

VI. What God has bid us remember, let nothing ever make us forget.

Quicken, O Lord, our Affections and Devotions, that we may celebrate thy Day as we ought.

THOUGHTS.

I. **H**E that writes on Thoughts, writes on the Pride and Perfection of Humane Nature, on that which must yield us, in a great Measure, the Satisfaction or Torments of the other Life; Thoughts excusing or accusing their Owners.

II. Many Obligations lie upon us to govern our Thoughts, as well as our exterior Words and Actions.

III. The Laws of our Lord prescribe to our Affections, set Bounds to our Fancies, regulate our Desires, direct our Intentions, govern our Wishes, strike at Sin in the first voluntary Motions.

IV. For God will certainly punish no Man for an Imperfection that is not in his Power to prevent, and which he did not himself voluntarily contract.

V. God

V. God will not call us to account for having the Seeds of Evil scatter'd in our Composition, but for suffering them to fructifie in the Soil!

VI. But it must be own'd, that as to all the irregular Motions of the inner Man, that fall under the Disposal of our Wills, God has concluded them under Sin, *Isa. 55. 7. Prov. 14. 22.*

VII. Nothing is so unexceptionable a Demonstration of the Power of Grace, and the Sincerity of our Hearts as a Conscientious Care and Management of those Thoughts that fly up and down in them.

VIII. And if we bewail and labour to remedy those Excursions of our Thoughts, which we cannot totally hinder, they are not our Sins but Infirmities, which will never affect our main State.

IX. But it is just with God, that those who will take Liberty in their Thoughts, should be given up to their own Imaginations, and so reap the Fruit of their own Ways.

X. Thoughts are as the Principal, outward Acts but as Accessaries; those have in them the Nature of the Cause, the other of the Effect.

XI. Let the Consideration of the noble and dignified Nature of our Thoughts induce us to an orderly Management of them; for they are Beams of that Light which is inaccessible. We are framed after the Image of the Immortal

tal God, and are design'd to be made more ample Partakers of his Nature.

XII. Wherein else, but in this thinking, reasoning Power, do we differ from the Inhabitants of our Stable, or our Kennel? And as this Discriminates our Nature from theirs, so, I had almost said, does one Man differ from, and excel another, by how much he can lay out his Thoughts to more generous Purposes.

XIII. Thoughts then are the Principle of Spiritual Life, or Spiritual Death in us.

XIV. The greatest and hardest Work of a Christian is least in sight, which is the ordering of the Heart, it is our Spirits, that God, who is a Spirit, hath most Communion with: There's no Law to bind the inner Man, but the Law of the Spirit of Grace.

XV. Mental Sins were the First, and are still the most crying Provocations.

XVI. A good Christian begins his Repentance where his Sin begins, that is in his Thoughts.

O, thou boundless Ocean of Mercy, who art Good, not only beyond what we can deserve, but what we can wish; cleanse the Thoughts of our Hearts by the Inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnifie thy holy Name, thro' Christ our Lord. Amen.

XVII. Great part of the World are sadly to seek what to do with themselves when alone;

alone; now every Body ought to be sufficiently provided at Home for his own Entertainment, and learn to employ themselves with their own Thoughts.

XVIII. *Seneca*. Many People are e'en weary of their Lives for want of Entertainment in their own Thoughts. A wise Man is never so busie as in the solitary Contemplation of God. How to live and how to die is the Lesson of every Moment of our Lives.

XIX. *Emp. Antoninus*. Ones own Breast is a Place the most free from Crowd and Noise in the World, if the Mind be well in Order, and our Thoughts entertaining. The Happiness of your Life depends upon the Quality of your Thoughts, therefore Guard accordingly. A Mind that's Sound and Healthy is prepared to digest all Sorts of Accidents, but when 'tis clamorous in Wishes, 'tis sickly and unsound.

XX. 'Tis for want of thinking upon what we habitually know, that the World is ruined. What a Folly 'tis to let our Thoughts dwell where our selves but sojourn!

XXI. Happy are the Contemplative, the World envies them not, but rather pities them as melancholy forlorn Creatures; because they partake not of their Joys, nor have any relish of 'em. The greatest Pleasure is the Pleasure of the Thoughts, when imploy'd well, 'tis an intellectual Feast. The Advantages of Conversation are mightily talk'd of, but a little

keeping Company will acquaint us with all that's worth knowing in the World. It is not seeing a great deal, but reflecting well upon what one sees, that makes even a worldly Man Wise.

XXII. One may as well expect to grow stronger by always Eating, as wiser by always Reading; too much over-charges Nature, and turns more into Disease than Nourishment. 'Tis Thought and Digestion which makes Books Serviceable, and gives Health and Vigour to the Mind.

C L E R G Y.

I. **A** Mballadours are by the Laws of all Nations to be used with a Respect answerable to the Quality of those that send them; Ministers are Christ's Ambassadors, 2 Cor. 5. 20. therefore ought to be respected and esteemed, 1 Thess. 5. 13.

II. If Ministers live ill, their Character should defend them from Contempt, and the Relation they bear to God should secure them from ill Usage.

III. The Wickedness of a Minister does not render his Office Useless or Ineffectual; the Efficacy of an Ordinance does not depend upon the Quality of the Person, but upon the Divine Institution, and the Blessing God has entail'd upon it.

IV. Some

IV. Some think the Maintainance of the Clergy too much, or their Merit too little, yet it cost them nothing, no Man having purchased more of his Estate than what remains after the Tithes are paid.

V. It is indeed of infinite Concernment, that all who take upon them the Conduct of Souls, should do as St. Paul exhorts *Timothy*, *Tim. 4. 16.* Take heed to themselves, as well as to their Doctrine; Mankind being so mightily addicted to Imitation and Example, that they will never think them serious and in good earnest, in pressing those Duties upon others, which they make no Conscience of performing themselves.

VI. The Office of a Guide is not duly, is not regularly discharged, except he be a Pattern as well as a Director: Their Behaviour should confirm their Discourses, and their Practice illustrate and declare the Truth of their Principles.

VII. Good Men alone are duly qualified to promote Goodness effectually in others.

VIII. The Blemishes of Spiritual Guides are a most unhappy Obstacle to their Labours, and of pernicious Consequence to the Souls intrusted with them.

O Lord, so guide and govern the Minds of thy Servants the Bishops that they may choose fit Persons to serve in the sacred Ministry; and give them Grace, that both by their Life

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and Doctrine they may set forth thy Glory, and set forward the Salvation of Men.

IX. Men may scatter the Spiritual Seed ; they may Explain, Exhort, Rebuke, but it is not in their Power to give one Word they say its proper Efficacy ; the Creation of a Spiritual as well as a Natural Life is God's peculiar Work. Medicinal Applications must not be given over whatever the Event and Success be, which is God's Concern, not ours.

S I N.

I. **T**Hose who are truly converted will have an Indignation at Sin wherever it is, though in the nearest Relation ; we must not buy Peace so dear as to comply with any in their Sins. Till we come to stand in awe of God, more than Men there's no hopes of Reformation.

II. Sin will everlastingly be Folly, and Perseverance therein Madness in spite of Multitude, Fashion, Custom and Example.

III. *St. Bernard.* Then God is angry indeed, when he suffers us to Sin without making us smart for it.

IV. To be permitted to sin without Disturbance is the worst Effect of God's Anger.

V. *Adam's* Sin was made big by the Little-ness of the Temptation.

VI. What was lost by the First *Adam* we have offered by the Second ; we suffer no more
by

by an imputed Sin, than we enjoy by an imputed Righteousness.

VII. It seems clear that no Person ever did or shall suffer eternal Death for no other Sin than that of *Adam*.

VIII. *St. Austin* saith, That tho' God can be merciful without our Merits, because he is Good, yet he cannot condemn us without our Demerits, because he is Just.

IX. God leaves no Means unassay'd to bring us to himself, what is it then that so transports us out of our Wits, and our Interest as to choose ruin.

X. Punishments are as natural Effects of Sin, as Smoke is of Fire; and we must put out the one to prevent the other.

XI. Some wink with their Eyes, lest they should see, *Matth.* 13. 13. and are the more blind for the Light, *John* 9. 39. These are not only naturally dead in Sins, Trees without Fruit, but Trees whose Fruit withereth, twice dead pluck'd up by the Roots, *Jude* 12.

XII. Where Resolutions of Repentance usher in Transgressions, there we may be sure it is the Devil that suggests them; for where he gets Admittance thus, by Purposes of after-Penitence, he fails not to prosper still in his Attempts upon the same Conditions; 'tis evident, that by this very Train he draws most Men on through the whole Course of Sin and Life.

XIII. Our

XIII. Our Sorrow for Sin, if it be right, will bring forth Fruit meet for Repentance, otherwise all our Tears are but like Rain upon a barren dry Ground.

XIV. The Fool and the Sinner do, in the Scripture Language signifie the same thing.

XV. The less Sense of Sin, commonly the greater Guilt, and then certainly the greater Danger.

XVI. Any Mischance makes me miserable that makes me a Sinner.

XVII. Whoever allows himself in any one Sin, makes himself incapable of obtaining a Pardon for any.

XVIII. Of all Miseries none are so justly lamented as our Sins and Infirmities; the wretched Load and Incumbrance these are, and the Disability they bring us under of attending without Distraction to holy Duties.

XIX. As Weeds in a Garden may be pull'd up, yet not hindred from growing again, so the Ground of corrupt Nature will always be apt to produce Sins, therefore we must never cease fighting against them.

XX. A good Intention will never justify an ill Action, nor will a good Action justify an ill Intention; both must be good, or neither will be acceptable.

XXI. Some will, to prevent imaginary Mischiefs, run headlong into real ones.

XXII. It

XXII. It argues a Disease and Sickneſs, as well in the Soul as in the Body, to be continually tossing from one ſide to the other; ſound Religion, like the Author of it, is the ſame Yeſterday, to Day, and for ever.

Discover to them, O Lord, their Sins, who know not that they do amiſs; that by true Repentance they may prevent thy Judgments.

XXIII. Sin blinds the Eye and hardens the Heart, brings us into Danger, and puts us out of Fear; when the Underſtanding is darken'd, the next Words we read is paſt feeling, *Eph. 4. 19.*

XXIV. They who mourn for their Sins never ſo bitterly, and yet return to them at the next Occaſion, give a very good Evidence of their Weakneſs, but none of their Repentance.

XXV. Thoſe Victories are ſtill Miſerable that leave our Sins unſubdued.

XXVI. The Kingdom of Satan, like that of God, may be compar'd to a Grain of Muſtard Seed, *Matth. 13. 13.* which, tho' little in it ſelf, is mighty in its Increaſe.

XXVII. Cuſtom does ſtrangely preſcribe to us the Commiſſion of one Sin, ſmoothing and glibbing the Way to the next.

XXVIII. Fineneſs and Irreligion make up the Character of this Age which has no heat with its Light, with all the gay Appearances of Life, has the Chilneſs of Death upon it.

Rev.

Rev. 3. 1. Thou hast a Name that thou livest and art dead.

XXIX. Nothing, I confess, so hard as to reclaim a vitious knowing Age.

XXX. Should a Christian be in his other Affairs, as he is in relation to his Salvation, the World would not endure him, he would pass for a very Fool.

XXXI. I know not which is the greatest Sottishness in Men, to take so little Care of their Salvation, or to think that that little will do.

Suffer us not, O Lord, to speak Peace to our selves, when there is no Peace; but grant we may judge of our selves as thou judgest of us, that we may never be at Peace with our selves till we are at perfect Peace with thee, and by Purity of Heart be qualified to see thee in thy Kingdom, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

XXXII. To tell some Men of the Pleasures of Religion, the Delights of Meditation, and the Comforts of a good Conscience, is to set Colours before a blind Eye; they have neither Notion nor relish of the Matter, being to the full as much dead and crucified to the other World, as the mortified St. Paul was to this.

XXXIII. These are those whom the *Psal-mist* calls Men of the World, who have their Portion in this Life, and whom our Saviour sets forth by the more significant Title of the Children

Children of this World, *Luke* 16. 8. 'Tis to be feared those Children of the World make the greatest part of it, and some of them the greatest Figure in it.

XXXIV. What are the Lives of most great Persons, but continued Scenes of pompous Tumult, Noise and Shew, to entertain their Senses?

XXXV. What can be more absurd than to look for a Heaven of refin'd and spiritual Happiness, and yet lead a life of Sense as an Introduction to it?

XXXVI. As the Plague is the most Mortal among Diseases, so a Spirit of scorning is among Sins; therefore we are bid not to bestow a Reproof on them, *Prov.* 9. 7.

Grant, O my God, that thy Love and thy Fear may so universally affect the Age, that thy great and beloved Name may be universally ador'd and lov'd.

XXXVII. They that are Proof against the Fear of God, have no manner of Principle that can save them; no curb upon their Mind that can restrain and keep them in from running headlong into the Snares of the Devil.

XXXVIII. Some People glory in their not pretending to Religion, their not being Hypocrites; as if it were a less degree of Impiety for a Sinner to be Impudent than to be Modest, to glory in their Shame, than to be ashamed when they do amiss.

PAS.

PASSIONS.

I. **T**Hose who have no Conflicts it may be fear'd will have no Victory, but are totally subdu'd, such have the Peace of Tributaries.

II. In the Sense of Religion we are all Warriours or Slaves, either dead in Trespasses, or stand upon our Guard continually against our Sins.

III. And as some make an ill League, so others multiply their Trouble by too nice and impertinent Scruples, thinking every Temptation a Sin, which it is not unless yielded unto.

IV. Here we are in a State of Imperfection, and can never be free from Temptations; but it is only our Consent that rendereth them Criminal.

V. How could that be Sin, without which I could not be Vertuous?

VI. If I could not be angry, I could not be meek; if I could not rebel, I could not obey; were I void of fear I could not watch; If I had no Inclination to Vice, I could not be Vertuous.

VII. It is the Work of Religion and Reason to regulate and subdue the Passions.

VIII. We must learn to distinguish between our Natural Desires and our Wills, else we shall bring him in guilty of Sin, who took away the Sin of the World.

IX. Christ in his Agony desired the Cup might be taken from him, and this Desire did not derogate from his Obedience, but commended it, in that he brought down his natural Desires to the Will of his Father, and would drink the Cup which his humane Nature trembled at: *Not my Will but thine be done*; Matth. 26. 39.

X. Herein is Obedience when a Man doth the Will of God against his own Will, that is natural Desires.

XI. St. Bernard saith, Sin hurteth not where there is no Consent.

XII. When our Love is fix'd on Piety, our Anger on Sin, our Fear on God's Wrath, our Hope on Things not seen, our Sorrow on what is done amiss, all these are included in those three Words, *Walk in Christ*.

Set up, O King of Heaven, thy Throne in my Heart, command my Senses, my Appetite, my Affections; display thy Banner, exercise thy Power, and defeat all the Enemies of my Salvation.

XIII. We ought to be extremely careful of the directing of a Passion, which as it is placed, must either dignifie our Nature, or degrade it.

XIV. To be at Peace with God, we must be at War with our own sinful Inclinations.

XV. If

XV. If Inclination to a Folly would justify our Commission of it, in what part of Life should we begin to be Wise and Vertuous? Heaven is proposed as a Reward, not for following but conquering our Inclinations.

XVI. Religious Perfection consists in a habit of Righteousness, what before we courted with Fondness and Passion, we now shun with Fear and Vigilance; Habit is a second-Nature, and what is Natural is pleasant and easie.

XVII. The less we have of the Fear of God the more we have of eternal Fear.

XVIII. The Health of our Soul is no more to be depended upon than that of the Body; and though we appear secure from Passions, we are in no less Danger to be hurried away with 'em, than we are of falling sick when we are in perfect Health.

XIX. The original Ground of all Disquiet is within; for inordinate Affections, and vain Fears, are the polluted Fountain from whence the bitter Streams and perplexed Thoughts of a troubled Mind flow.

XX. If we content our selves with outward Duties only, we bring Religion into a very narrow Compass; the main of our Business lies within, the Ax must be laid to the Root of the Tree; sensual Appetites brought quite down, before we can attain a peaceful serenity of Mind.

XXI. St.

XXI. *St. Cyprian.* No Victory is greater than that which is gain'd over our ill Inclinations.

XXII. In the Death of our Passions consists the Life of our Souls.

XXIII. They that most mortifie natural Inclinations, receive most supernatural Inspirations.

XXIV. Those who neglect their own Will, comply best with God's.

L O V E.

I. *Saint Austin.* Love that one good in which all others center, and this will answer all thy Wishes; whatever can contribute to the Perfection of the outward or inward Man, is there to be met with in abundance.

II. *St. Austin.* Love is the only Motion and Affection of the Soul, which can qualifie a Creature to answer the End of its Creator.

III. *St. Austin.* The way to know God truly, is to love him, by loving God we come to love our own Souls, and to be solicitous for their Safety and true Happiness.

IV. Heaven is a State of the most perfect and consummated Love, and therefore the best Thing we can do on Earth is to tune our Hearts to this Divine Strain.

V. As we judge of Trees by their Fruits, so may we judge of our Love to God by its
E Fruits,

Fruits, this is the Way of Tryal Christ himself hath given us, *John* 14. 15. *If ye love me keep my Commandments*; where this one Proof is wanting, it will be impossible to testifie our Love to God.

VI. Love will draw after it all other Vertues, will perfect and improve them, and will at least hide those Faults of them which it cannot correct; for this is the universal Excellency which supplies the Defects of other Works.

VII. Charity is a Grace not out-dated in Heaven, as Faith and Hope are; loving and obeying are taken for the same Thing in Scripture.

VIII. The Heart is the Sacrifice that God demands, and unless that be offer'd, the richest Oblation will find no Acceptance.

IX. Not to love our Brother, and to hate him, in Scripture are equivalent, different Expressions for the same Thing, *1 John* 2. 11. and 3. 10.

X. Since God has put this Affection of Love in us, what Ingratitude is it to place it on any thing but him; all the Good in Creatures is derived from him, those Rivulets should lead us to the Ocean from whence they come. Love is the best thing we have to bestow, let us not lavish it out on worthless Objects. God gives us all that we enjoy, what height of Baseness is it to be fond of the Gifts and neglect the Giver?

XI.

XI. *St. Austin.* Strive to be like him then, and let this Likeness prove (for nothing else can) that thou dost truly love him.

XII. *St. Austin.* Were not the Love of God necessary in point of Duty, it is absolutely so in point of Interest and Prudence.

XIII. *St. Austin.* When the Heart is not fixed on God, it is never fixed any where, but roves about perpetually from one thing to another, seeking Rest where it is never to be found.

XIV. Nothing should make us do an ill Thing; but the Benefit of a Person that stands in need is a sufficient Warrant for leaving a good Thing undone; for this is not so much omitting to do well, as a prudent Contrivance to do better.

XV. To be touch'd with the temporal Misfortunes of Men, needs no more than common natural Pity; but to be touch'd with the Misery of their immortal Souls, must be an Illumination from above.

XVI. When through Unkindness, those we love, vouchsafe not to accept, either Reproof or Advice from us, Prayer is that which we always have in our Power to bestow, and they never in theirs to refuse.

Take thou Possession of me, O thou glorious Monarch of Souls, deeply imprint thy Love in my Heart, universally diffuse it through all my Faculties.

P L E A S U R E.

I. 'TIS but to be Wise, and we shall be Holy too; for if we once understand the World, we cannot but despise it.

II. The good are Masters of their Pleasures, the bad are Slaves.

III. 'Tis with Men, as 'tis with Children; 'tis not the Rattle, nor the Toy, but the Sil-
liness of the Fancy that creates the Pleasure.

IV. Emp. *Antoninus*. No good Man was ever inwardly troubled for the Omission of any Pleasure, or the balking of his Senses, from which it follows, that Pleasures, strictly speaking, are neither Profitable nor Good.

V. To despise Pleasure is the greatest Pleasure.

VI. 'Tis a more advantageous Wish to say God be with ye, than to say, Health, Honour, Riches and Pleasures be with you.

VII. Those who are Wise, will value their Safety above their Pleasure, and enriching their Minds, before indulging their Bodies.

VIII. None can stand firm, that are delighted with moveable Things, they that are subject to worldly Affections bind themselves to a Wheel, which turns about continually.

IX. He that glorieth in his sensual Delights triumphs in his Faults.

X. Let no Tenderness for our own Ease make us indulge our Sloth at the Expence of our Virtue.

XI. Those

XI. Those whose Souls are enamour'd with God and Goodness, neither expect nor desire to find Pleasure from sensual Enjoyments.

XII. How wretched are those who can have no Taste of any Joys, but those that are the Causes and Fore-runners of eternal Sorrows?

XIII. Pleasure dwells no longer upon the Appetite than the Necessities of Nature, which are quickly and easily provided for, all that follows is a Load and Oppression.

XIV. The Pleasure of Conscience is not only the greatest but may serve instead of all others.

XV. A Palsie may as well shake an Oak, or a Feaver dry up a Fountain, as either of them shake, dry up, or impair the Delights of Conscience.

XVI. In short run over the whole Circle of all earthly Pleasures, and we shall find them a very unworthy Prize to purchase with the Loss of our Time, our Reason and our selves.

XVII. None find more Dissatisfaction in earthly Things than those that strive most to please themselves with them.

Lord, help us, and consider not so much our Unworthiness of thy Aid, as our irremediable Ruin if we want it.

Our

Our SELVES.

I. *Saint Bernard.* Above all other Subjects study your own self; he who is thoroughly acquainted with himself hath attained to the most valuable sort of Learning.

II. *Seneca.* We must provide our selves within, and when we are safe there, we are invincible.

III. *St. Bernard.* No Knowledge which terminates in Curiosity and Speculation is comparable to that which is of Use; and of all useful Knowledge that is most so, which consists in a due Care, and just Notion of our selves.

IV. *St. Bernard.* Govern your Passions, manage your Actions with Prudence, and where false Steps have been made, correct them for the future, let nothing be allow'd to grow Head strong and Disorderly, but bring all under Discipline; set your Faults before you and pass Sentence upon your self.

V. *St. Bernard.* Let us run the Race by pressing forward to the Mark continually, not with our Bodies, but our Inclinations and Desires.

VI. *Seneca.* I would withdraw to speak with my self, and what should that be, but that which we are apt to speak one of another? I will speak ill of my self, I will examine, accuse, and punish my own Infirmities.

VII. *Seneca.* I will have a care of being a Slave to my self, for it is a perpetual, a shameful, and the heaviest of all Servitudes.

VIII. *Emp. Antoninus.* Why should I fret and vex, that never willingly vexed any Body; certainly I can have no reason to be more unkind to my self, than to other People.

IX. *Emp. Antoninus.* A Man has work enough to make himself tolerable to himself.

X. *Emp. Antoninus.* If you depend servilely upon the good Word of other People, you act below your Nature, and neglect the Improvement of your self.

XI. Hardly in any thing are we more unhappy than in not being sensible of our own Unhappiness.

XII. He that will not own himself to be wounded shall never be cured.

XIII. What a stir we make to hide the Blemishes and Infirmities of our Souls, as if to conceal them were really to take 'em away.

XIV. 'Tis as hardy a matter to make some discontented with the Poverty of their Spiritual Condition, as it is to make them contented with their Temporal.

XV. He that converses much with himself, and little with other People, is the wisest and happiest Man.

XVI. 'Tis a Symptom of an ill Habit of Body when the Taste is so vitiated as to delight

light to feed on Trash and unwholesom Things; and so it is in the State of the Mind.

XVII. 'Tis no wonder we are so Industrious to cure our bodily Diseases, because we feel them, but have no Sense of the Distempers of our Souls.

XVIII. The smallest Sin allow'd and indulg'd, loses the Name of Infirmary, and passes for Enmity in the Sight of Heaven.

XIX. The Corruption of our Nature is seldom and too slightly thought on, and too feebly strove against; and it is from that that all our Faults and Misfortunes spring.

XX. The best and most direct way to know Humane Nature is to know ones self, and that must be by conversing much with ones self; but if we must needs have other Company, let it be the Dead rather than the Living.

XXI. *Solomon says, There's more hope of a Fool, than one Wise in his own Conceit, and of the greatest Sinner, than of one conceited of his own Righteousness:* If once the Disease take the Brain the Cure must be Difficult. Conceitedness is a weighty Quality, and often fetches down the Scale, when there's nothing in it besides.

XXII. We ought not to judge of our selves by those Crowds of unwelcome Thoughts which press in upon us; if they are our Torment they will never be our Sins. XXIII.

XXIII. If those ill Thoughts were our own, why such Horrour? Why such Indignation? We are always pleased with what we like, this may convince us they are none of our own.

XXIV. Christ himself was tempted, why should we be dismay'd? It is a most assured Sign of Grace; the Devil persecutes not his Friends but his Enemies.

XXV. Perhaps, were it not for such Thoughts, we might be proud of our spiritual Attainments, and that would highly displease God, and these only displease our selves.

XXVI. Watch diligently, lest Self-love and Vain-glory (which ever lieth in wait to intrap) do not corrupt and prove the Plague and Bane of all thy good Works: For, Self-love is of all Flatterers the greatest.

XXVII. There is no greater Temptation than to have none at all; sleeping Waters nourish Poyson: Our Life is a continual Warfare, Vertue hinders not Temptations but surmounts them.

XXVIII. It is a great Knowledge to understand our own Infirmities, and the worst of Follies to be wise in our own Sight.

XXIX. To vanquish ones self is a nobler Conquest than if we could attain the empty Title (with that great *Macedonian*) of the Vanquisher of the World; every Conquest

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will

will encrease our Strength against the next Assault.

XXX. And for Opinion and Fancy which makes the great Difference amongst us, every one finds something to value himself upon, there being nothing in which all Mankind are so equal, as in Self-love and Self-flattery.

XXXI. Tho' many would change Fortunes with others, there are few that would change themselves, and the Difference of Fortunes is very Inconsiderable, while every one is so well satisfied with himself.

XXXII. We live in the Dark, and know not what is good for our selves: The only way to be easie and safe is to choose nothing for our selves, nor prescribe to Providence.

XXXIII. 'Tis as easie to deceive ones self without perceiving it, as 'tis difficult to deceive others without being perceived.

XXXIV. Self denial is the most exalted Pleasure, and the Conquest of ill Habits, the most glorious Triumph. The Affairs of our Souls can never stand at one stay; the Moment we gain not Ground we lose it: As often as we indulge our selves in point of Duty, we decline, and fall back toward Sin, or at least into an Indisposition towards Goodness. We must watch continually over our selves, and suffer no hour to slide by without its due Improvement.

XXXV.

XXXV. Without some Violence upon our selves, Sin cannot be subdued, nor ill Customs broken.

XXXVI. The Change of our selves is a very laborious Undertaking, yet this must be done to encourage it, be assur'd God never did nor will despise a Soul afflicted with a Sense of Sin.

XXXVII. In Charity I ought to prefer a greater Concern of my Neighbour's to a slight one of my own; but in equal Circumstances I am at liberty to be kind first to my self.

XXXVIII. Since our greatest Deformities are within us, we should be the severest Censurers, and first Reformers of our own Souls.

XXXIX. When we fight more against our selves, and less against God, we shall cease fighting against one another.

XL. There is more requir'd to qualifie us for our own Company than for other Peoples, we must have Knowledge enough to see the Vanity of the World, and Vertue enough to despise it.

St. Bernard. Inlighten my Mind, O God, that I may know my self, and love thee so, that I may encounter and overcome the World, and all the Enemies of my Peace and Salvation.

The MIND.

I. *Seneca.* Our Duty is the cure of the Mind rather than the Delight of it. What can be more ridiculous than for a Man to neglect his Manners and compose his Stile?

II. *Seneca.* 'Tis the Mind that makes us Rich and Happy in what Condition soever we are. He that lives according to Reason shall never be Poor, and he that governs his Life by Opinion shall never be Rich.

III. *Emp. Antoninus.* I never had a sight of my Soul, and yet I have a great Value for it, because 'tis discoverable by its Operations; and by my constant Experience of the Power of God, I have a Proof of his being, and a Reason for my Veneration.

IV. *Emp. Antoninus.* The great Business of a Man is to improve his Mind, and govern his Manners; this is minding the main Chance; as for all other Projects, whether in our Power to compass or not, they are no better than Trifling and Amusement.

V. The Soul of Man, like a fertile Field, seems alike apt to produce either Herbs or Weeds; the Faculties of it are capable of being the Instruments of the greatest Evil or the greatest Good.

VI. *St. Austin.* The Reason why we can never meet with Satisfaction from these frail and transitory Matters, which captivate our Affections,

Affections, is because the Soul is above them all, and of a Condition so excellent, that no Good but the Supreme can answer its Desires, and be indeed its Happiness.

VII. *St. Austin.* None can bring a richer Present to God than an honest and good Heart; by this we love God, and choose God, and arrive at him, and attain to the Enjoyment of him.

VIII. God, who is a constant Spectator of all our Actions, hath inspired us with immortal Minds: O! let us disengage them from the Love of earthly Things.

IX. Age it self, which of all Things in the World is not to be baffled or defied, when it begins to remind us of our Mortality by Pains and Aches, yet then the Pleasure of the Mind shall be in its full Youth and Vigor.

X. Diseases both of Mind and Body are catching, but Health is not so.

XI. *Seneca.* It must be the Change of the Mind not the Climate that will remove the Heaviness of the Heart; our Vices go along with us, and we carry in our selves the Causes of our Disquiets.

XII. To disregard the Body wholly, is to pretend to live like Angels whilst we are but Mortals; but if we prefer it to, or equal it with, the Mind, we degenerate into Brutes.

God's Wisdom and Mercy other than Mens.

I. **T**HE impious folly of some! Who, willing to flatter themselves, that because God's Mercy exceeds theirs, and they could not find in their Hearts to condemn others to eternal Punishment, are forward to think, that however it is threaten'd, they shall not be condemn'd.

II. A great Indignity they offer to the most Holy God in thus making him to be such as themselves.

III. God's Mercy is infinitely more than theirs, but yet of a Nature altogether different; theirs proceeds from Weakness and an evil favouring of Sin, and because their Love to Holiness is little, they would therefore effect more for wicked Men than God, who hath all Power, will do.

IV. Therefore let them not deceive themselves with vain Words and Thoughts, God will in Righteousness inflict those Punishments on them, which they through a vicious Mercy would have remitted unto others.

V. God's Mercy is abundantly shewn in accepting upon such gracious Terms Mens poor Obedience, but if they refuse to obey, and prefer the Pleasure of Sin before his Commands, he would sooner out of the Stones of the Street form Men, whom he might save, than shew Mercy to those, who are so unworthy of it.

VI. The

VI. The greatest abuse of God's Mercy is to sin in hopes of it.

VII. Some use Mercy as amazed Passengers do a Plank in a Shipwreck, lay so much Weight upon it, that they sink both it and themselves.

VIII. Let us obey as much as we can, and then we need not be deny'd the Comfort of hoping as much as we can.

IX. Mercy is God's darling Attribute, he will least endure to be thought wanting in that.

X. Men seem to court the Favour of the World more by the Goodness of their Understanding than by the Honesty of their Minds; they do not so much blush for their Crimes as their Weaknesses, and more patiently suffer their Vertue to be called in Question than their Wisdom and Prudence.

XI. Those are certainly Superstitious who think they shall either please or displease God, merely by doing or not doing some indifferent Things, which he hath neither commanded nor forbidden.

XII. The main Opportunity for Knowledge is after this Life, but the only Opportunity of being Good is now; and if we take care to improve this, we are sufficiently secure of the other, but if this be neglected all's lost.

XIII. The more we know, the more we discover our Ignorance, that being the chief Thing we learn by our Study.

XIV. We ought to busie our selves in the Study of Learning and Knowledge, no farther than as 'tis conducive to the Interest of Religion and Vertue.

XV. The most trivial Matter in the World is worth knowing, if I have any Concern depending upon it; and the greatest without that is utterly insignificant.

XVI. Certainly Rectitude of Will is a greater Ornament and Perfection, than Brightness of Understanding, and to be divinely Good more valuable than any other Wisdom and Knowledge.

XVII. There are two Scripture Examples both of Men eminently wise and of learned Education; *Moses* and *St. Paul*, who declares, *that he determin'd to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him Crucified*: And *Moses* makes this passionate Wish, *Deut. 32. 29. O that they were Wise that they understood this, that they would consider their latter End.*

XVIII. Unhappy Times, when nothing is more unlike Christ than they who call themselves Christians! Nothing more unlike the Wisdom of the Gospel than the Wit of the Age we live in!

Excite in me, O Lord, a Thirst after Useful, rather than much Knowledge, and enrich

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me with Treasures of that inspired Wisdom contain'd in the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make me Wise unto Salvation.

Death and Judgment,

I. *Saint Anselm.* Think then, think, while that Thought may do thee Good, of the Day when God shall call thee to a strict Account for thy Time, for every Talent bestow'd upon thee, and expect some Improvement, or reckon with thee for the Misemployment, of them all.

II. *St. Anselm.* Whatsoever shall be found upon thee of Sin and Vanity, shall be condemned, and every Day and every Hour laid to thy Charge, which was not directed to the Service and Obedience of thy God, who trusted thee with them.

III. *St. Anselm.* Be assured how secure soever thy Conscience may be, yet he, whose Judgment must conclude us to all Eternity, accounts no Sin small that affronts his Majesty, acting in despite of his Laws: And what Offence then can the wretched Sinner find which he can have the Confidence to think, or call a little one?

IV. *St. Anselm.* It can never be advisable for a Sinner to shut his Eyes, and plunge himself blindfold into that Ruin, which a timely Foresight of might have deliver'd him from; Men ought not to be flatter'd in this Case.

V. *St.*

V. *St. Anselm.* In this deplorable Extremity, what will become of me? What Measures can I take? Or what will be my Defence? Is not there one who is called the Angel of the Covenant, *Mal. 3. 1.* The Saviour and mighty Deliverer? Upon his Name I will call aloud, *Jesus, the Blessed Jesus!* This is he, the Saviour in whom I trust.

St. Anselm. My Iniquities are many and grievous; yet do they admit of Number and Measure; thy Goodness and thy Power know no Bounds, therefore I beseech thee by all the past Demonstrations of thy Love, as thy Majesty is in it self, so let thy Mercy be to me infinite.

VI. Of all Things, Death should never be met unthought of.

VII. *The Sting of Death is Sin,* 1 Cor. 15. 56. And true Repentance takes that out and disarms this King of Terrours.

VIII. *Seneca.* Few take care to live well but long; ——— when yet it is in every bodies Power to do the former, and in no Man's to do the latter.

IX. *Seneca.* 'Tis with our Lives as with our Estates, a good Husband makes a little go a great way, whereas let the Revenue of a Prince fall into the Hands of a Prodigal, 'tis gone in a Moment.

X. Death is an Eclipse, which often happens in fair, as well as cloudy Days.

XI. Death

XI. Death is not so dreadful and painful as we imagin; 'tis called a Sleep, now Sleep creeps on us insensibly, and charms our Senses softly with invifible Fetters; though we sleep every Night, we are not able to discover how this comes to us.

XII. *Seneca*. Since Death is Neceffary, why fhould we fear it? And the time of it being uncertain, why fhould we not always expect it?

XIII. There are fo many Ways to let Death in, and Life out, that 'tis next to a Miracle we do not die every Day fince we were born.

XIV. For when we die nothing but the good or bad Difpofition of our Souls will accompany us into the other World.

XV. 'Tis greater Wifdom to be afraid of finning than to be afraid of dying; a greater Bleffing to preserve our Innocence than to prolong our Lives. Long Life is far from being a Bleffing in all Cafes.

XVI. Can any make a bleffed Immortality the Object of their Expectations and Defires, and yet live in a flavifh Fear of Death, which they know is the only Paffage to it?

Grant, O Lord, that when I come to die, in the midft of all my Pains, I may feel the fweet Refreshings of thy Holy Spirit, comforting my Soul, fuftraining mine Infirmities, and relieving all my Spiritual Neceffities.

TAKING

Taking Offence and Judging.

I. **E**Mperor *Antoninus*. God does not only bear with a wicked World, but provides liberally for it: And are you that are just going off the Stage sick of the Company, tired with ill Men, and yet one of those unhappy Mortals your self?

II. *Emp.* 'Tis a great Folly to run from other People's Faults, and not part with your own. This is going quite the wrong way to work, grasping at a Project Impracticable, and losing an Advantage that lies in your own Power.

III. *Emp.* You have done a Kindness, and your Neighbour is the better for it, what need you be so ignorant as to look any farther, and lie gaping for Reputation and Requital? Men are born to be Serviceable one to another, therefore either reform the World or bear with it.

IV. *Emp.* I suppose you understand the Plague too well not to run away from it, and what's the Plague? Why, if you are a Knave or a Libertine, you have the Tokens upon you; the Infection in the Mind is ten times worse than that of the Air; the Malignity is not near so fatal in the Blood, as in the Will.

V. *Emp.* All Things are in a perpetual Flux, and a sort of Consumption; you your self are so, and the whole World keeps you Company.

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VI. *Emp.* Don't disturb your self about the Irregularities of other People, but let every bodies Faults lie at their own Door.

VII. What have we to do with other Peoples Faults, when every Man has Work enough to mend one.

VIII. We must not Judge according to slight Appearances, but with Caution, Circumspection and Mercy, lest we find Judgment without Mercy hereafter.

IX. Those that are of a truly humble Spirit, and deeply sensible of the many Imperfections and Infirmities they find in themselves, will make Allowances for the same in other Men.

X. When we find a Disposition in us to censure others, let us turn it upon our selves; here we have Liberty, if we don't want Inclination to indulge it as much as we please.

XI. We cannot conceive too great an abhorrence of our own Faults; that Vigour and Sharpness which is Criminal when used towards others, becomes commendable when apply'd to our selves.

XII. If my Judgment of another be never so ill, provided the Evidence be full and clear, it cannot be taxed as Unrighteous. If I see any live in a constant Course of Sin, to pretend Charity here is ridiculous: Charity indeed obliges me to believe and hope the best, where there is any room for a favourable

Construction, but it does not oblige me to put out my Eyes, and reject all the Information of my Senses.

XIII. To express an Indignation against open notorious Vices and Immoralities is safe; for we do but judge what God himself has judg'd already, we cannot be mistaken in repeating the Sentence he has pronounced against all that work Iniquity.

St. Austin. Lord, let me never favour nor forget my own Miscarriages, nor ever be Inquisitive after, or severe upon the Faults and Failings of others.

XIV. 'Tis a great Attainment to bear the Faults of those we converse with, with a Calmness, which proceeds not from an unconcernedness for their Good, but a just Dominion over our own Spirits.

XV. How unreasonable it is to expect to make others what we would have 'em, when we cannot so much as make our selves what we are sensible we ought to be!

XVI. It is as absurd to expect that the Perfection of every Man should be the same as 'tis to expect that all Mens Bodies should be of the same Height, and their Minds of the same Capacity.

XVII. Our Nature is so unattentive to Good that there can scarce be too many Monitors.

XVIII. Though Beams in our own Eyes make us unfit to attempt casting out the Mote

out of our Brothers; yet this holds not on the contrary, that a Mote should hinder our Endeavours to remove a Beam; every Speck does not blind, nor does every Infirmary make one unable to discern, or incompetent to reprove the gross Faults of others.

Defend me, O my God, from all my visible and invisible Enemies, take out the Beams and Motes from my Eyes, that I may be qualified to behold thy Divine Beauties.

The WORLD.

I. **S**eneca. It is not Health, Nobility, or Riches, that can justify a wicked Man, nor is it the want of all these that can discredit a good one.

II. He that values himself for his Gold is inconsiderable without it.

III. The World is of no Value to him, who dedicates himself wholly to God.

IV. The way to bring our selves with ease to a Contempt of the World, is to think daily of leaving it.

V. That which sets the Price and Value upon every wordly Blessing is the Opportunity it affords us of doing Good.

VI. All the noise and bustle in the World is about who shall have the greatest share of it.

VII. A Candle that's near affects us more than the Sun at a great Distance off; there's
more

more Force in one single Now, than in many Hereafters, the leaft present Interest outweighs a very confiderable Reverfion.

VIII. We plot deeply for ſhallow Interest, and flight Things of real Worth and Confequence.

IX. We are wife where Wiſdom might be ſpar'd, and Fools, where 'tis highly neceſſary.

X. What can be more ridiculous, than to be ſerious in Trifles, and trifling in Things ſerious?

XI. Spiritual Wiſdom is the beſt Wiſdom, and he is the moſt wiſe who is wiſe unto Salvation.

XII. If our Ciſterns are never ſo full, we muſt ſtill truſt to the Fountain; all worldly Things are but Cyphers when God withdraws his Bleſſing from 'em.

XIII. 'Tis too common that thoſe that have moſt of this World have the leaſt regard for the next, and ſo are impoveriſh'd with their Riches, made ſpiritually Poor.

XIV. 'Tis a great Miſtake to think that the Happineſs of Men differ as much as their Fortunes do; for Happineſs is not entail'd upon Riches, Power or Honour.

XV. Outward Circumſtances of Fortune may give the World occaſion to think me happy, but can never make me ſo.

XVI. IF

XVI. If my Mind becomes Sensual, 'tis a worse Fate than to be scorn'd, or poor; for this makes me the Contempt of Heaven.

XVII. 'Tis with Life as 'tis with other Blessings, the right Use of it is our Happiness, and the Abuse of it our Misery.

XVIII. There is a Vertue in enjoying the World, as well as in renouncing it; and 'tis as great an Excellency in Religion, to know how to abound, as how to suffer Want.

XIX. Necessity may sometimes subject us to the Slavery of the World, but voluntary Choice never should.

XX. If I build my Felicity upon my Estate or Reputation, I am happy no longer than the Tyrant or the Traytor will give me leave to be so.

XXI. *Erasmus* said, He desired Wealth and Honour no more than a feeble Horse did a heavy Cloak-bag.

Grant, O Lord, that I may desire no Peace, Quiet and Ease in my Heart, but in a constant and resolute Opposition of all the Temptations of the World, the Flesh and the Devil.

T I M E.

I. *Seneca.* The Wit of Man is not able to express the Blindness of humane Folly; in taking so much more care of our Fortunes than our Time; People share our Time with us at Pleasure, so profuse are we of that only

ly Thing of which we may be honestly covetous.

II. If a Man borrows a paltry Sum of Money there must be Bonds and Securities, but he that has my Time thinks he owes me nothing, though it be a Debt that Gratitude it self can never repay.

III. The Value of a Day, nay of an Hour is inestimable, and the Loss of it irreparable.

IV. What is it that we trifle for? Why do we linger? Time must be laid hold on immediately, or it is gone for ever.

V. Idleness is a Breach of the Eighth Commandment, because it robs us of our Time which is one of the greatest Thefts.

VI. Life is not so long, nor are we so overstock'd with Time, nor is our depending Interest so little, that there can be leisure for unnecessary Curiosities. Our Entrance into this World, and our whole stay in it, is purely in order to another State.

VII. The Time spent in the Study, though in the Search of unedifying Truths, is reckon'd almost as well bestow'd as in the Chapel, by those who would rather be accounted learned than Pious.

VIII. Of all Prodigalities, that of Time is the most desperate.

IX. They who employ their Time in conversing with God, are more honourably, more profitably and more pleasantly busied than they can possibly be any other way.

X. God

X. God gives us not Time, as we do Children Rattles, only to play with.

XI. Emp. *Antoninus*. Our share of Time is but a Moment in Comparifon, why then can't we manage that Little handsomely and be fatisfied? Notions without Practice is Impertinence.

XII. *Seneca*. There's no Man fo miserable as he that is at a Lofs how to fpend his Time.

Business and Encouragements of Christians.

I. **S**OME who are not void of Defires and Inclinations to be faved, yet are fo given up to a trifling Temper, that they live without Thought; their Minds are too Airy, and roving to confider ferioufly, and fet heartily about what is abfolutely neceffary in order to Salvation. Diversions, pleasant Company, entertaining Books take up moft of their Time; however this may be free from the Reproach of Men, it muft needs be highly blamable with God, becaufe they perfectly lofe the end of Living.

II. Some endeavour to erect a new Scheme of Court Divinity by making the Way to Heaven broader and fmoother than it is, yet both the Projectors and thofe that follow them will fadly find themfelves miftaken in the End.

III. The way to Heaven is difficult, becaufe the Obftructions that divert our Progrefs are fo great, the Snares that furround us fo many,

the Path so streight and slippery, the Spirit so weak, and the Flesh so exceeding frail, that we can hardly be cautious enough against so manifold Dangers.

IV. Lukewarmness in a Christian is infinitely worse than perfect Coldness and Aversion; because a Sinner may be brought to a Conviction of his Danger, but the other will not be made sensible of it.

V. To cure our spiritual Laziness, let us excite in our Hearts that eager Appetite, that hunger and thirst after Righteousness our Blessed Saviour prescribed to his Disciples.

VI. St. *Jerom* says, Have a care and abate no part of your Diligence upon a vain Presumption that you are safe; for a Calm to a Christian is a sort of Storm.

VII. Life ought not to be spent in Idleness and Pleasure which is design'd for a constant Exercise of Virtue, and a perpetual Combat for the obtaining that Crown which is given to none but them who are Victorious over their Spiritual Enemies.

VIII. The Temper of the World we live in is to love Novelty, and to reason eternally upon Matters above our Reason. The Truth is, we are too nice Philosophers, and too little Christians.

IX. We speak admirably well of God and Religion without being at all moved with what we say : What a madness is this to imagine

gine a bare Acknowledgment of the Myſteries of Religion can be ſufficient, without producing any Teſtimonies of our Faith.

X. It is by ſeeking diligently, and continuing knocking, that we muſt obtain what we aſk.

XI. The Female Sex eſpecially ſeem ſo totally devoted to that one care of rendring themſelves agreeable to the World, that we can ſcarce diſcover what time is left for working out their Salvation.

XII. The unreaſonable Partiality which moſt expreſs for their Bodies, does but too loudly ſpeak their Cruelty and want of Concern for their Souls.

XIII. The World bewitches Mens Minds with ſpecious Outſides, dazles them with a counterſeit Shine of its glaring Vanities, and when once intoxicated with theſe Charms, the Underſtanding is darken'd, the Affections perverted, Truth and Subſtance are forgone for Shadows.

XIV. We affect to know every thing but the Darkneſs of our own Minds; this inward Stupidity is indeed one of the moſt fatal Diſeaſes brought upon the Soul by Sin.

XV. Like ſilly Children we are taken up with Toys and Trifles; our Minds ſo prepoſſeſſed with the Love of ſenſible Objects, that we have no reliſh left for Spiritual and Heavenly.

XVI. An

XVI. An intemperate Fondness for our Persons cannot away with Reflections so very shocking as those of Death and our latter End.

XVII. Our Minds might be capable of very great Things if we would accustom them to despise little ones.

Free us, O Lord, from all imoderate Love of Pleasure, and give us a Desire of Holiness not to be satisfied till it possesses.

XVIII. Emp. Antoninus. 'Tis a shame that a Man should not be Master of his Mind as well as of his Countenance, that his Will should be stronger for his Looks than for his Thoughts, prescribe what Air he pleases to the First, and let the other lie Mutinous and Ungovernable.

XIX. Ill Qualities are catching as well as Diseases, and the Mind is at least as much, if not a great deal more, liable to Infection than the Body.

XX. God has given us Reason and Comprehension, a large Possession, a rich Soil it is, but the Manuring and Cultivating, and making it Fruitful is our Duty. Let us call in our Cares and Endeavours unprofitably spent Abroad, and try to turn them to a better Account at Home.

XXI. They who know the Delights of Devotion, know withal that there is no other fit to come in Competition with it; nor need they

they go farther than their Closet, for the most agreeable Entertainment.

XXII. Emp. *Antoninus*. Look inward and turn over your self, for you have a lasting Mine of Happiness at Home, if you will but dig for it.

XXIII. From that instant that we distrust our own Strength, and feel our spiritual Impotence and Blindness, humbly imploring God to enlighten and direct us; from that instant, I say, we shall become strong by flying to him, who according to the Prophet *Isaiah* 1 r. giveth Power to the Faint, and to him that hath no Might he encreaseth Strength.

St. Austin. Help me, O my God, be thou the Joy of my Heart, take it all to thy self, and let it be so entirely filled with thy Pleasures; that there may be no room left for the trifling Vanities here below.

XXIV. *St. Austin*. Great, I confess, are my Faults and the Punishments due to them; but greater, infinitely greater, are the Merits and Sufferings of my dear Redeemer; between my Sins and his Righteousness there is no Comparison, no Proportion at all, either for Quality or Degree, no more than there is between God and Man, between an Atom and an Infinite.

XXV. *St. Austin*. God has so ordain'd that it is in every Man's Power to be happy; the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth Violence: To
desire.

desire and resolve, and endeavour, and strive is to be qualified, and no Man ever fail'd in his Attempt, who was willing to take it by Force.

XXVI. *St. Austin.* Heaven indeed is an invaluable Treasure, yet every Man is capable of being a Purchaser, because the only Price God expects is a Man's self; give but your self, and this will be look'd upon as a Consideration sufficient.

XXVII. *St. Austin.* Never be discouraged at the Disproportion betwixt what you can pay, and what you hope to receive; for the Purchase is paid by another Hand to the utmost Farthing: This was done when Christ gave himself, that he might ransom you and make your Heart a Kingdom for his Father to reign in.

XXVIII. *St. Austin.* What Sighs and Groanings, what earnest Gasps, what impatient Thirstings ought I to bring, who am in pursuit of my God Day and Night, and desire to love and enjoy nothing but him only?

XXIX. *St. Austin.* We are taught, *Luke* 1. 52, 53. *Matth.* 5. 3. That none but they who see and acknowledge and lament their Poverty, shall be enrich'd by thee, while the Great and Rich in their own Conceits, shall be sent empty away, and left to perish in their supposed Sufficiency.

St. Au-

St. Austin. Behold, O Lord, a Wretch in extreme Poverty, addressing to the endless Treasures of thy rich Mercy; I come with all the Cravings of Spiritual Hunger, let me not be sent empty away, but gratifie the Appetite which thou hast approved, which thou thy self hast infused.

XXX. We then begin to be enlightned, when we are made sensible of our own Blindness, and gather Spiritual Strength when we feel and lament our inward Weaknesses.

XXXI. It is by no means upon any desert of our own that we are allow'd to repose any part of our Comfort and Confidence; for if the least Wishes and Pantings after Heaven be not in our own Power, how can we be secure of our own Preservance?

XXXII. The best Men have ever been the most Humble, and they whose Lives have been freest from Faults, have express'd least Assurance in their own Innocence.

XXXIII. 'Tis very plain, that no Degree of Perfection and Improvement can set us above the Apostle's Advice, of working out our Salvation with fear and trembling.

XXXIV. What Claim can they who make it their Principle to live easie and pleasant, and satisfy their Inclinations in every thing; what Claim, I say, can they put in to that Kingdom, which is promised to such alone as deny and mortifie their Desires, and strive

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against

against what they so industriously indulge?

XXXV. It is an Infatuation common to Wordly-minded Men, saith St. Gregory, that their Hopes and Thoughts are too intent upon transitory Enjoyments, to bear any due regard to those that are durable and eternal.

XXXVI. Let us set about the Business of our Salvation heartily and we shall not miscarry in the Undertaking; it is a hidden Treasure, and not to be found without diligent Search.

XXXVII. The Difficulty of our Salvation is generally an effect of the Weakness of our Faith.

XXXVIII. The ways of Virtue are troublesom only to such as follow their vain Inclinations; when we have once gain'd that Point of resisting and vanquishing our Desires, Sin then becomes uneasy, and we can find no Charms in it.

XXXIX. Religion is easie and pleasant to the resolute and constant Practicers of it, the strait Path grows broader and smoother as we advance farther in it.

Come, O come, thou Bridegroom of my Soul, and dwell in me for ever; but, O Lord, I am afraid of my self, I dread my own Inconstancy, and have too much Reason for it; O give me a steadfast immoveableness of Mind in thy Service, that I may never depart from thee.

XL. 'Tis

XL. 'Tis faithful Obedience, not insolent Hopes that recommends to God.

XLI. We hug the Promises, but neglect the Commands, though they have an equal Right to our regard.

XLII. 'Tis strange to see how some reconcile their large Hopes with their slender Performances, and flatter themselves, that tho' they post on the broad Way, it will lead them to Life.

XLIII. We must fight manfully under Christ against the World, the Flesh and the Devil; Sloth in War is as mischievous as Treachery or Cowardice, he that keeps his Sword in his Sheath is as unformidable an Enemy, as he that brings none into the Field.

XLIV. Every Man ought to aspire to the Dominion of himself, and when he has so done, 'tis no less happy than a Calm is, after the noise and danger of a Tempest.

XLV. When our Corruptions are subdu'd, we shall be equally unmoved with the Terrors or Allurements of the World, and neither frighted nor flatter'd out of our Duty.

XLVI. 'Tis the indisposedness of our own Hearts which renders our Duty unpleasant to us.

XLVII. The Mercy promised to them that confess and forsake, will never reach to them that confess and retain: There are Instances more than enough of those that
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dislike the Consequences, though not the Crime.

XLVIII. Those that covet to be rich towards God, can never be dazled with outward Greatness, nor with the shining of that Gold, which is but a Vein of that Earth we tread on.

Suffer me not, O Lord, to think thou wilt ever be reconciled to my Sins, or reject my Repentance. O let me never be destitute of a well-grounded Hope, nor yet possessed with a vain Presumption.

XLIX. *Seneca.* 'Tis only Pride and Curiosity that involves us in Difficulties.

L. We have a restless Enemy to deal withall, and it must be a restless Conflict; where there is no Combat there can be no Victory.

LI. It concerns us to live in a constant awe among so many Changes and Chances, still fearing the next Scene, lest it should be that of a Punishment, for our Abuse of the former.

St. Austin. O Lord, assist all thy Servants with such Kinds and Degrees of thy Grace; as are suitable to their respective Conditions.

LII. *St. Mark 13.* Watch in every Thing, at all Times, and in all Places; think not of ceasing till you come to your Journey's end.

LIII. 'Tis dangerous for a Christian at any time to be spiritually asleep, that is, secure and careless.

LIV. Sleep

LIV. Sleep steals as insensibly on the Soul, as the Body, take heed, and do not indulge it.

LV. They had need be awake, who walk on the Brink of a deep River, or a Precipice: A Christian's Path is so narrow, and the Danger so great, that our Hearts should be always upon the Watch.

LVI. God is pleased to give them that truly fear him such Vales of Comforts here, that were there no Wages to be expected hereafter it would be our Interest to be Religious.

LVII. Some are only constant to their good Duty when they have neither Business nor Diversions to hinder them, and by often Omissions, become voluntary Dwarfs in Spirituals.

LVIII. We think the Fate of *Korah* and his Company was dreadful, but those whose Time, Thoughts and Discourses are mostly taken up with earthly Things, may as well be said to be swallowed up by it.

My God, thou art all I want; grant me thyself, and all my Wants and Wishes will be at an end.

LIX. They only can have the Holy Spirit for their Comforter, who have him for their Guide. Guilt is always terrifying and affrighting.

Fill my Mind, O God, with Truth, inspire good Desires, and bring them to Action; deal to every one the various Gifts of thy Spirit, in such Kinds and Proportions as thou seest most Useful and Seasonable.

LX. We had need be watchful in the Use of indifferent Things; for in them the Devil sets Snares most for those that are Good, *Matth. 5. 29, 30.* If thy right Eye or right Hand offend, (by which is meant Things in themselves lawful and useful) cast 'em from thee.

LXI. Certain it is, that more Souls perish thro' too much Confidence, than by too much fear: Where one despairs, there are Thousands presume.

LXII. *Psalms 11. 7.* God will rain Snares upon Sinners, and indeed the whole World is full of them: Tell me then, saith *St. Athanasius*, why dost not thou study to escape these Snares; but livest securely and inconsiderably amongst so many Occasions of Sin, so many deadly and mortal Diseases, without Medicines.

LXIII. He that gives me Money to buy an Estate of him, as truly gives the Estate, as if I had never bought it of him; the Grace by which we obey, God bestows on us.

LXIV. The best Evidence we can shew for Heaven, is unfeign'd Obedience; the utmost we can attain to here is not to commit great Sins,

Sins, nor to allow our selves in little ones.

LXV. No Hopes should make us do an ill Thing, nor any Fears make us omit a good one.

LXVI. Restraining Grace is vouchsafed the Wicked as well as the Good; *Esau* and *Abimelech* were with-held from sinning.

LXVII. *St. Austin* saith, That Man without the Wedding-Garment doth represent the whole Body of the Wicked, who are ignorant of the Shameful Condition they are in, the God of this World having blinded their Eyes.

St. Austin. Lord, inable those that are strong to stand, help those that are growing in Goodness to prosper and improve daily more and more, and to all that live in Sin, (to wretched Me in particular) give the Grace of speedy Recollection and effectual Amendment.

LXVIII. What an ill State were we in, did not God govern what we call Chance and Fortune.

LXIX. God does by a Wise and Just, tho' many times an invisible Power, influence and over-rule all humane Affairs.

Grant, O Lord, that I may desire no peace, quiet and ease in my Heart, but in a constant and resolute Opposition of all the Temptations of the World, the Flesh and the Devil.

LXX. A few good Heats is not the Temper of Piety, but its Fits, 'tis a religious Fever, a Disease.

LXXI. Christians must be ever climbing, and be they never so much Saints, they never do their Duty, if they do not labour to be more so.

LXXII. 'Tis with Grace, as 'tis with Nature, the Exercise of each breeds both Strength and Pleasure.

LXXIII. The slothful and wicked Servant signifies one and the same thing, and must undergo the same Sentence.

LXXIV. Let us take care that our Hearts are set on the Things of God, and we shall soon find that our Memories will no more fail us here, than in other Things.

LXXV. As is the Heart, such will be the Life; as is the Fountain, such will be the Streams; and as is the Tree, such will be the Fruit; 'tis our Saviour's own Rule, therefore cannot deceive us.

LXXVI. A true Zeal has such a peculiar Lustre, such a heavenly Majesty, that nothing else can imitate it; it is always pursuing Good, the Honour of God, and Happiness of Man; 'tis meek and gentle under its own Affronts, but warm and bold against those that are offer'd to God.

Let me, O Lord, never neglect my Duty, nor ever suspect thy gracious Acceptance of me; give me a hearty Zeal to do the best I am able, and a settled Persuasion that thou requirest no more of me.

LXXVII.

LXXVII. *St. Austin.* Christ dy'd for me, surely then the Bitterness of Death is past, in that Death of his is all my Hope and Trust, his Mercies are great, and how worthless forever I may be in my self, yet while I have a share in these, I cannot be rejected or despised.

LXXVIII. *St. Austin.* God's Mercies prove him willing to save; therefore his Power is no longer a Terrour but my best Security.

LXXIX. *St. Austin.* I am indeed a grievous Sinner; but notwithstanding the Reproaches of my own Breast make me sometimes uneasie and affraid, yet I do not despair; nay, I must not, I dare not despair, for this were to bind one Fault upon another, and aggravate all the Wickedness I have ever been guilty of before.

LXXX. *St. Austin.* He that despairs of Forgiveness of his Offences, does in effect declare that God is not Merciful, and by Distrust robs him of his beloved Attribute, which is the highest Outrage and Injustice that any Man can possibly commit against God.

LXXXI. *St. Austin.* Neither the Number nor Quality of my Sins terrifie me, when the Death of my Saviour comes into my Mind; because I know they cannot in either respect outweigh his Sufferings upon my Account, provided I sincerely love him.

LXXXII.

LXXXII. *St. Austin.* Hard fate of them, who answer not the end, for which they were, at all.

LXXXIII. 'Twere happy for some, if they were less confident, and more diligent.

LXXXIV. So great is God's Care of us, that he sends his holy Angels to guard us from outward Violence, and his holy Spirit within us, to defend us from inward Assaults.

LXXXV. The Difficulties of Duties will certainly abate and wear off by degrees, if we constantly practise them; and is there not Good enough in an everlasting Rest, to countervail for a few Days or Years labour.

LXXXVI. We are travelling every Moment to an eternal World, and all that we enjoy or suffer in this Life is only the Convenience or Inconvenience of a short Journey to a long Home?

LXXXVII. 'Tis a Comfort when we are sensible of our Weakness, and wants, and Labour, and strive against our Defects, and would fain be better.

LXXXVIII. A good Conscience never wants Courage, nor does the Owner of it care more what Men say, than what they dream of him, when he discharges it.

LXXXIX. The Pleasure of the Religious Man is an easie and a portable Pleasure, he carries it in his Bosom; 'tis like a Traveller's putting all his Goods into one Jewel, the Value the same,

same, and the Convenience greater; and as here the Hazard may be more, so there the Security.

XC. God has given no Man a Body as strong as his Appetites, but has corrected the Boundlessness of his Desires by stinting his Strength, and contracting his Capacities.

XCI. Let us but take as much Pains with our Souls, as some have done with their Bodies, and I doubt not but (through the Grace of God) we shall make them as pleyable to the Motions of Goodness, as some Mens Joynts and Limbs are to those Motions, to which they were so unapt at first.

XCII. Religion is so burthenfom to none as to those, who are infrequent in the Use of it; Use makes heavy Things light.

XCIII. In our Forefather's Days the Kingdom of Heaven was taken by Violence, they thought nothing, and we think every thing too much to do, or suffer, to obtain it.

Vouchsafe me, O Lord, thy blessed Assistance in all my Thoughts, Words and Actions, in all the Days, Hours and Moments of my Life: Guard my Soul, govern my Body, raise my Spirits, guide my Ways, and furnish me with holy Thoughts.

AFFLI.

AFFLICTIONS.

I. **G**OD, who requires the whole Heart entirely, doth many times make the World bitter to make us weary of his Rival.

II. Crosses and Calamities do as naturally flow from precedent Sins, as the Crop doth from the Seed sown; and as we every Day commit some Sin or other, 'tis no wonder if we reap the Fruit of it in Afflictions.

III. Misery, which amongst Men takes off their Kindness, entitles us to God's Favour.

IV. *Lam. 3. 33.* Wherever God administers to us a bitter Cup, we may be sure the Ingredients are Medicinal, and such as our Infirmities require.

V. God is too wise and indulgent a Physician, to cure with a Remedy, worse than the Disease.

VI. The roughest Seasons (tho' they may be unsuitable to our Desires) have in them a proper Comeliness, as well as Times of the greatest Serenity.

VII. None are so miserable as wicked, and since we so greedily swallow the Poyson, why should we be so averse to the Antidote?

VIII. We wound our selves by Sin, and God heals us by Afflictions.

IX. *Emp. Antoninus.* That's best for every Man which God sends, and the time of his sending too is always a Circumstance of Advantage.

X. The

X. The Best need Afflictions for tryal of their Vertue; how can we exercise the Grace of Contentment, if all Things succeed well? Or of Patience if we feel no Pain? Or Forgiveness, if we have no Enemies?

XI. A Physician equally aims at the Recovery of Health in rough Physick as Cordials; besides, the Good have not their Portion here, as the Wicked have.

XII. 'Tis Just with God to bring real Afflictions on those, who by their Discontent, make light ones heavy.

XIII. If we are unbetter'd by Troubles, we have reason to expect their Continuance.

XIV. Emp. *Antoninus*. Pray rather that God would discharge your Desires after temporal Things, than satisfy them, let this be the Rule for your Devotion, and see if the Event does not answer.

XV. *Seneca*. The cross encounters of Fortune we are not to look upon as a Cruelty, but as a Contest.

XVI. 2 *Tim.* 3. 12. All that will live *godly* must suffer *Persecution*; if not from Men, yet from the Devil, who walks about like a roaring Lion seeking whom he may devour.

XVII. Abundance of Christians, who take up just so much of Religion as consist with their Ease and Pleasure, are not very sensible of the Persecutions of the Soul; but all who are careful to perform their Baptismal Vow feel them daily.

XVIII.

XVIII. Of all Obedience, that which is Passive is the most difficult ; for we hate Pain to a higher Degree, than we love Pleasure ; this the Devil was sensible of, when he desir'd *Job* might be afflicted.

XIX. Afflictions are indeed the Arrows of the Almighty, but sent on a friendly Errand, like the misty Vail of the Morning, which for a while shuts out the Sun, but at length contributes to the Brightness and Lustre of the Day.

XX. He who sways the Scepter of the Universe, shuts up, or lets loose, the Creatures Influences at his Pleasure. Not a Creature in Heaven, Earth or Hell, but stands ready prest, at God's Command, to perform his Pleasure.

XXI. It is the Character of the Wicked, that they are not in trouble as other Men, *Psal.* 7. 3, 5. 'Tis as reasonable to refuse Submission to God in what he commands as in what he inflicts.

XXII. Every Condition hath some uneasiness, so that when we court a Change, we rather seek to vary, than end our Miseries.

XXIII. The greatest Evils are below, the least Favours above, our Deserts.

XXIV. They that in spite of all Reluctancies of Sense, intirely submit their Wills to God's, God will send either some outward Allays, or such inward Comfort and Support, as shall counterpoise the Affliction he takes not off.

XXV. Let us but make sure of Resignation, and Content will follow without any farther Industry.

XXVI. A dejected Spirit lives much beneath the rate of Christian Principles, there's a holy Chearfulness and Greatness of Mind, that becomes the saddest Providence.

XXVII. What Ingratitude is it to murmur at one Affliction, and over-look a thousand Mercies, who have forfeited our Right to all.

XXVIII. All Creatures, Elements, or wicked Men, have no Power, except it be given them from above, all Distempers are commanded and restrain'd by him.

XXIX. Though our Troubles proceed from second, from natural Causes, they are but as Instruments of his invisible Hand; by being violent against them, we oppose the Principal Agent.

XXX. God loves a chearful Receiver, as well as a chearful Giver.

XXXI. 'Tis impossible to have a grateful Sense, and a solicitous Distrust of God's Goodness at the same time.

XXXII. That Belief which supports us under present Evils, will not let us feel Disturbance from the Possibility of future ones.

XXXIII. Limit not God to Means, 'tis fit he should choose his own Weapons to fight his own Cause; he needs not our Sins to secure his Church and Laws.

XXXIV.

XXXIV. God never suffers those of a diligent Hand, a frugal, merciful Disposition, to want, tho' he may Pride, Prodigality and Idleness.

O my God, pardon me, protect me, provide for me; for thou art my only Hope and Happiness.

XXXV. This is the great Security of our Lives, that nothing can hurt us without a Divine Permission.

XXXVI. Since we cannot understand the Mysteries of Nature, why should we expect to understand the Mysteries of Providence?

XXXVII. The Government of Mankind in this World is chiefly in order to the next, this will answer all the Difficulties of Providence which concern this Life.

XXXVIII. There may be such a Mixture of Good and Evil in good and bad Men, which may make it very Wise and Just in God, to afflict the Good and prosper the Bad.

XXXIX. God governs all second Causes, to produce such Effects as he sees fit.

XL. Whatever Reproach we receive from ill Persons here, if we bear it as we ought, 'twill be sure to advance our future Glory.

XLI. God always Proportions our Afflictions according to our Strength.

XLII. The greater our Care hath been to please God, the greater will our Confidence and Trust be in him in our Distresses.

XLIII.

XLIII. Afflictions and Troubles are no Arguments of God's Displeasure, but are the Fruits of his Care of us; for whom he loves he chastises.

XLIV. Without God no Succours are Strong, no Counsels Wise, no Remedies Successful.

XLV. We mistake extremely in imagining that what happens from without, is the real Cause of our doing well, or ill; Prosperity or Adversity do not make Vertue or Vice, but draw them into Practice, do not change us from what we were, but only discover what we really are.

XLVI. What are we, poor, weak, defenceless Wretches, that we should expect to be exempted from Troubles? Unsanctified Prosperity is the bane of Vertue.

XLVII. We err, saith St. *Jerom*, if we think ever to be free from Persecution, we must expect always to feel Contradictions and Combats in our corrupt Nature.

Grant, O Lord, that whatsoever we find afflictive to us here may serve only to wean us from the World, and draw us nearer to thy self.

A N G E R.

I. **E**Mperor *Antoninus*. Anger and Impatience often prove much more Mischievous than any Provocation.

I

II. The

II. The greatest Minds are always most serene and quiet.

III. Excess or the over-doing of any thing is enough to turn Good into Evil: Never was any wise Man impatient.

IV. No Man is Master of himself, so long as he is a Slave to any thing else.

V. Were we angry, grieved, or afraid, where, and when we ought, and no more than we ought, what a Calm would be in our Spirits? Where 'tis otherwise, they are like the troubled Sea, never at rest.

FORGIVENESS.

I. **I**T should allay our Anger to remember that unless we forgive, we cannot hope to be forgiven. There's nothing will so much entitle us to God's Mercy at the Day of Judgment, as our having shew'd Mercy here.

II. It is our Interest to pardon others, as the Condition of being pardon'd our selves.

III. Not to be able to forgive others is a certain Proof of our not being forgiven.

IV. A Gentleman qualified as a Christian ought to be, will never think himself disparaged by the Talk of Fools and Mad-men, and such he must believe those, who despise the Laws of their Maker.

V. Can we pretend we love our Neighbour as our selves, when it produces quite contrary Effects; Self-love lessens our Beam into a Mote,

Mote, Love to him magnifies his Mote into a Beam.

VI. To buy by one Measure, and sell by another, is not more unequal, than differing Standards for our own, and our Neighbour's Faults.

VII. Distracted is a flat Contradiction to the grand Rule of Charity, violates the whole second Table of the Law; so our Saviour renders it, *Luke 10. 7.*

VIII. He who fights a Duel engages himself in a double Murder, his own, and his Adversaries; for the willful Hazard of both, fastens on him the Guilt, though they happen to survive the Combate.

IX. Those who are free to expose themselves to all warrantable Dangers, when any publick Occasion is afforded, if then they shew their Daringness, 'twill be apparent that 'tis not the Fear of Death, but Sin, which locks up their Swords from private Duels.

X. 'Tis infinitely more Honourable to forgive a Wrong than to revenge it; the one makes us like God, the other like the Devil; how glorious is it to imitate God in what he counts his chiefest Glory?

P R I D E.

I. **T**Hough Rewards are infallibly annexed to those Duties that are sincerely perform'd, 'tis merely God's Grace and Favour.

to bestow it, and not any Worth in what we do.

II. The best of our Endeavours are so empty and worthless, that they scarce merit an Acceptance, much less a Reward.

III. It should cure us of our Pride to consider who it is that makes us to differ; God's Bounty and Goodness to us, and not our Deserts.

IV. The Sin of Pride is so great, that it cast the Angels out of Heaven; therefore if we may judge of Sin by the Punishment, it was not only the first but the greatest Sin, that ever the Devil himself hath been guilty of.

V. We need no better Proof of the Hainousness of Pride, than the extreme Hatred of it to God, *Prov. 16. 5. Every one that is proud in Heart is an Abomination to the Lord.*

VI. Those that are fond of Applause, while they pursue it, how little do they taste it? When they have it, like Lightning it only flashes upon the Face, and is gone, and 'tis well, if it does not hurt the Man.

VII. All external Duties must be directed to further our internal Conversation with God, else they will but puff us up, and make us proud of nothing.

VIII. We may be as Ambitious as we please so we aspire to the best Things.

For

Forgive, O Lord the Pride that attends our prosperous, and the Repinings which follow our disastrous, Events.

H U M I L I T Y.

I. **T**HE Effects of Humility are these, it recommends us to God, endears us to Men, and establishes a Peace and Calm in our own Breast.

II. If we once entertain any high Conceits of our own Performances, it will blast the very best of them, and make them utterly unacceptable to God, as it did the *Pharisee*, when he began to boast, the *Publican* was prefer'd before him.

III. Humility is a generous Contempt of our selves: A lively Sense of God's Holiness, Greatness and Goodness, gives us a clear sight of our own Nothingness.

IV. What am I of my self, but a Sinner, a Name that ought to fill me with Horrour, a wretched Creature that has deserved the Indignation of Heaven, who live upon Alms, the Charity and Compassion of an omnipotent God.

V. Humility is the Foundation of all Vertue.

VI. Humility, saith *St. Austin*, with an alloy of Frailties and Failings is more acceptable to Almighty God, than vertuous Actions puffed up with Vain-glory and spiritual Pride.

VII. St.

VII. *St. Austin* and *St. Ambrose* both declare, when I humble and abase my self, and know that I am good for nothing, then am I exalted and raised up.

VIII. When we see our Infirmities and Miseries, and place our Confidence in God alone, then are we more strong and full of Courage.

IX. *Rom. 10. 12.* The humble Man thinks of others better than of himself, because he hath a greater Sense of his secret Defects, than of the Faults of others; he carefully distinguishes what is God's, and what is his own, he is nothing but Sin and Misery, all that is good in him is God's.

X. *Seneca.* 'Tis some degree of Vertue for a Man to condemn himself, and not to be so much offended with other Mens Vices as with his own.

XI. *David* said, *Psal. 77. 3.* When I am in Heaviness, I will think upon God; he found that the best Expedient, better than to think of his Greatness, Magnificence and Victories. 'Tis strange that Man should value himself for being able to do mischief, when God thought it his Glory to do good, *Psal. 52. 1.*

XII. 'Tis better to bear the Scorns and Contempt of the World, than the Reproaches of our own Minds; for an Unconcernedness is promoting Religion.

O Lord, convince us powerfully of our own Wretchedness, make us to see our Spiritual Poverty,

Poverty, that so in all thy Dispensations towards us, we may heartily acknowledge that we are less than the least of thy Mercies.

O, my Lord, I abhor, I loath, I am weary of my self; desiring nothing more than to be made like unto thee in Purity and Holiness, Love, Charity, Meekness, Patience and intire Resignation to the Will of God.

PROFANENESS.

I. **I**F Men did but consider what a reproach Profuseness is to their Discretion, what a Reflection it is upon their Judgment, even to support a Character, they would live within the limits of their Fortunes.

II. God has made our present Satisfaction and our Duty so much of a piece, that we cannot transgress many of his holy Laws without forfeiting our Happiness in this World, as well as in the next.

III. Let the Difference of Mens Fortunes be never so great, he will always be poor, whose Expences are more than his Income, and he rich, who satisfies his Desires without exceeding the Measures of his Revenue.

IV. The Necessaries and Conveniences of life lie in a small Compass, but Luxury is boundless, and the Revenues of the Roman Empire were not sufficient to support the Profuseness of *Heliogabalus*.

V. St.

V. *St. Paul, Rom. 8. 6.* affirms plainly, that to be *carnally minded*, to contrive all Things for the present Pleasures, is *Death*, whereas to be *spiritually minded*, to care and contrive for the future Joys is *Life and Peace*.

VI. There is more Money given to be laught at, than for any one thing in the World, tho' the Purchasers do not think so, when they ruin themselves by Extravagances.

VII. Some People indulge their Superfluities till they come to want Necessaries.

VIII. They are much mistaken who think the Sin of Profaneness a small Fault, and that God will pity and not punish it; it will be Mortal if not forsaken.

IX. Gluttony, and Drunkenness, and Sensuality, are Sins incompatible with a true Christian, and destructive of all hopes of Heaven.

X. How light soever the Opinions or Practices of the World make of this Sin, the Gospel of Christ, which is that we must be judged by, declares plainly and fully against it. Can a greater Curse be wish'd, *Psal. 69. 22.* *Let their Table become a Snare, and that which should have been for their Welfare become a Trap.*

Cure, O Lord, our disorderly Eagerness after Trash, and suffer us not by abusing thy temporal Blessings, to forfeit those which are eternal.

DRUN.

DRUNKENNESS.

I. **D**runkenness is a Vice detestable in all; it turns a Man into a Beast, by drowning that Reason which should distinguish him from one.

II. The Effects of Drink are such, that had being drunk been enjoy'd as a Punishment, we should have thought him a more than ordinary Tyrant, that had invented it.

III. Some People's Brains may be so weak that they cannot bear what in some Respects appears not only safe, but useful to Health; whoever is of this Temper must strictly abstain, for though we are to preserve Health, we are not to do it with a Sin.

IV. Every Morsel to a satisfied Hunger, is only a new Labour to a tired Digestion, every Draught to him that has quench'd his Thirst, is but a quenching of Nature, and a Provision for Rheums and Diseases.

SWEARING.

I. **N**One own God more in their Oaths, than those that disavow him in their Discourse; is there a God to swear by, and none to believe in, none to pray to? What an Absurdity of Wickedness is this?

II. There is no noise on this side Hell, can be more amazingly odious, thus daring the Almighty by Oaths and Imprecations.

L Y I N G.

I. **E**Mperor *Antoninus*. He that tells a Lye knowingly is an irreligious Wretch.

II. Lying is a thing that is ashamed of itself, so much the Dregs of Wickedness, that none has had Chymistry enough to bring it into Reputation.

III. 'Tis wonderful that what is under so universal a Reproach, should be so commonly admitted in Practice.

FREE-WILL.

I. **W**HY will ye dye, O House of Israel, Ezek. 18. 31. By the very Question we may be assur'd God intended not our ruin.

II. *Tertullian* saith, the Recompence of Good and Evil can with no Justice be given to him, who is Good or Evil not freely, but of Necessity.

III. God permits Sin, though he has clothed it with Death, to make us afraid of it, and upon pain of eternal Damnation forbids it.

IV. To be willing to permit Sin, and to be willing that Sin should be committed, is as different in Sense, as in Sound; unless I will say that he who permits me to be wounded, because I would not look to my self cast the Dart at me.

V. God

V. God will not save us against our Wills; for to necessitate us to Goodness is not to try our Obedience, but to force it.

VI. God does not voluntarily take his Grace from any; but if the Power of it defends us not from Sin and Death, 'tis because we abuse and neglect it.

VII. St. *Bernard* saith, 'Tis only a Will free from Compulsion and Necessity which maketh a Creature capable of Rewards and Punishments.

VIII. Where there is no Choice, there can be no Tryal.

IX. Remember to observe our Saviour's Rule, *Watch and Pray*; by which he teaches us that we must not expect from him such irresistible Operations as shall act in us without our earnest Endeavours.

X. Sin takes its rise from nothing else but the unhappy Use of the great Blessing and Privilege of Liberty which God hath endowed rational Creatures withal. 'Tis impossible any should repent of doing what he could not but do, or of omitting what was never in his Power to effect, no more than that he could not flie like a Bird, nor move like an Angel. It is the Free-Mind only that is capable of Guilt.

XI. Nothing but our own Choice can undo us; let us do what we know to be our present Duty, and God will acquaint us with our future.

XII. Our Inability to do good is not created by God, but contracted by our selves; God's hardening is a consequent of our hardening our own Hearts.

XIII. 'Tis most true, what *Prosper* saith, A Man may lose Temporals against his Will, but not Spirituals; God will harden none, damn none, against their Wills.

XIV. God measures our Obedience, rather by the Desires, and Will, we have to obey, than by the large and exact Performance.

XV. As far as humane Prudence and Fore-sight reaches, God expects we should take care of our selves, if we will not he suffers us to reap the Fruit of their own Folly.

XVI. Tho' God has made us free Agents, yet he has not put us out of his Power, but when he pleases, can lay invifible Restraints upon us; and doubtless hinders a hundred times more than he permits.

XVII. God's Fore knowledge only proves the Certainty, but not the Necessity of Events; we certainly know at what time the Sun will rise, and set; but our Fore-knowledge is not the Cause of the Sun's rising and setting.

XVIII. Grace, as well as Nature, is liable to be abused.

XIX. *St. Austin.* God hath endued our Souls with such a Principle of Liberty, that it cannot be compell'd to the Commission of any

any Sin, and therefore every ones Salvation or Damnation turns at last upon our own Choice.

XX. We may compare the Grace of God to a Graft, which, tho' it be put into a Stock of another Nature and Kind, doth yet make use of the Juice of the Stock, and by co-operating with it, convert it by Degrees into its own Nature.

St. Anselm. Help me, O Lord, to advance so prosperously in the Way of Holiness, that all the Time I shall continue in this mortal Life, I may be perpetually doing thee acceptable Service in some kind or other, such as thy Providence shall call me to.

Fasting and Mortification.

I. **T**HE first Command we read of laid on Man after his Creation was Abstinence, *Gen. 2.* and the Law of Justice was given by Fasting, *Exod. 24.* and our Saviour himself did Canonize the sacred Use of Fasting, *Mat. 4.*

II. Because our Wills are our greatest Dangers, as being oft contradictory to God's Commands, we must endeavour to mortifie, that is, to deny our Wills, and strongest Desires in all the Instances of Sin.

III. We must subdue our Passions, there being a Tempest in the Soul of every passionate Person.

IV. A Spirit mortified is without Indignation at Injuries, not impatient in Troubles, indifferent to all Accidents, and that not out of a Stoical Apathy, Stupidity or Inapprehensiveness, but out of a Christian Magnanimity.

V. The Pleasures of Intemperance draw us as Load-stones do Iron, that is, not for Love but for a Prey, feeds upon that Metal, as those upon the Life of the Spirit, which is lessen'd as those grow high and strong.

VI. The best Companions of our Fasts are the Retirements of Religion, and the Enlargements of Charity and restraining our Thoughts from Cares, and our Senses from loose Objects, as well as our Palates from Dainties; or else we make that become a Sin, which is not in it self a Vertue, but may be a Foundation of it, by the end and manner of Performance.

VII. Fasting and Devotion are the only Armours of Proof against Temptation.

VIII. *Hippocrates* saith, Diseases for the most part, both of Soul and Body owe their Original to Fulness.

IX. It was eating the forbidden Fruit, that ruin'd the whole Race of Mankind, and it is still the weak Side, where the Devil lays his most dangerous Temptations.

X. If we do not mortifie our Passions here, Death will not kill them for us; Heaven indeed

deed perfects those holy Dispositions which are begun here, but the other World alters none, *he that is Unrighteous, will be Unrighteous still*, Rev. 22. 11.

XI. We must ever have a care not to lose the Substance for the Shadow, not to rest in the Means and neglect the End, taken up with Discipline without producing any Fruits of it.

XII. The Religion of the Means no farther entitles us to Heaven, than as it produces and promotes in us those heavenly Vertues, for which they are used.

XIII. When the Soul goes into Eternity, it leaves the Religion of the Means behind it, and carries nothing but those heavenly Vertues and Dispositions, which it hath acquired by those Means.

St. Austin. Correct, O Lord, our vital Palates, that we may truly relish Spiritual Joys, and lose all Taste and Appetite for any others.

Non-Resistance.

I. **T**HE Expression of God's Will through Christ in the New Testament is to be prefer'd before the Instances of his Providence in the Old.

II. No Laws in the New Testament are more express and direct than those against resisting Sovereign Princes.

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III. Our

III. Our Religion is justly more dear to us than our Lives; but that it is so, is to be shew'd by the Obedience it enjoyns, rather than by the Force it condemns; to assert the Gospel by breaking the Precepts of it, is the being true to it in the way of Falseness.

IV. Those who say that no Security is left to the Christian Religion, if resisting the higher Powers upon the Account thereof be deny'd, have no Strength in what they say, unless they could remove God, and his Providence out of the World, who will not suffer the Gates of Hell to prevail against his Church.

V. It is a very remarkable Place in *St. Peter*, 2 *Eph.* 2. 10, 11. which must needs be understood of evil Princes; for what occasion could there be for railing against those that were Pious and Good?

VI. And if those shall be reserved unto the great Day for more than ordinary Damnation, who do only speak evil of Dignities, what Flames will be thought hot enough for those who dare with Sword make Resistance?

VII. The Arms of the Church are Prayers, and Tears, and where there is a faithful serving of God, we need not fear but we shall be safe under his Protection. They are most safe, who contain themselves within those Bounds God has appointed to seek farther would be to find a Sin and a Blot rather than a Deliverance.

VIII.

VIII. Rebellion is such rank Poison to the Soul, that the least Scruple of it is Damnable, the very Intention of it in the Heart is Mortal.

O Lord, relieve all oppress'd Princes, defend and restore their Rights, and suppress all violent and warring Spirits, which unjustly disturb the Peace of Christendom.

CONTENTMENT.

I. **C**ontent is the true Philosopher's Stone, the Poor are rich with it, the Rich are poor without it.

II. Mankind are commonly made unhappy not by any thing without them, but by those restless Impatiencies that are within them.

III. The four Elements, Fire, Water, Air and Earth do not more make up Man's Composition than they supply his Needs.

IV. What is absolutely Necessary St. Paul comprizes in a small Compass, Food and Raiment, and proposes them as sufficient Materials of Content, 1 Tim. 6. 8.

V. Our Repinings proceed not from any Defects of God's Bounty ; but from the Malignant Temper of our own Hearts.

VI. Let the most innocent muster up their Sins and their Sufferings, and they will see a vast inequality ; we Sin in innumerable Instances, and are punish'd in few : When this
Disparity

Disparity is consider'd, we must join heartily in *Ezra's* Confession, *God has punish'd us less than our Iniquities deserve*, *Ezra* 9. 13.

VII. Let every one, when they compute what they want, reckon as exactly how much they are short of their Duty ; when this is duly ponder'd, they will think it a very gentle Composition to have the one unsupplied, so the other may be remitted.

VIII. God makes no Promise either concerning this Life or a better, but on Condition of Obedience.

IX. Our undervaluing common Mercies forces God sometimes to instruct us in their Worth, by making us feel what it is to want them.

X. The more impatient our Longings are for Temporals, the less in Reason should be our Hopes.

XI. God can order Things for the Best as well when they cross our Desires, as when they comply with them.

XII. However Matters may appear to us, every Thing shall prove for the Best in respect of God's Glory, and (if we belong to him) in respect of our Good too.

XIII. When Men thwart God's Will of Precept, they serve his Will of Providence.

XIV. We are but short-sighted, and for the most part see only the dark side of Providence, but in the great Day of Manifestation
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we shall be able to discern the Beauty in all the rugged Passages of it.

XV. They that are over-solicitous for their Bodies, are the contrary for their Souls.

XVI. Whatsoever is beyond a Competence is a Snare.

XVII. Immoderate Care is a Blemish to our Vertue, and a Reproach to our Nature.

XVIII. All our Actions take their Value from their Conformity to the Will of God. If we are impatient for earthly Enjoyments, we should take more care to suppress our Desires, than to satisfy them.

Grant me, O Lord, Sorrow for my Sins, Thankfulness for thy Benefits, Fear of thy Judgments, Love of thy Mercies, and Mindfulness of thy Presence, for evermore.

XIX. *Seneca.* Greatness stands upon a Craggy Precipice, and 'tis much safer and quieter living upon a Level.

Grant, dear Saviour, that my Understanding, Will and Memory, may be incessantly busied in the knowing, loving and remembering thee.

XX. Let us consider, that this Life is a proper Season for Service and Sufferings, the next for Rewards and Happiness.

XXI. The Experience we have of the Vanity and Uncertainty of all humane Glory and Greatness, should make us prefer the inward Peace of Conscience before all outward Tranquility.

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O my God, let a contented Mind be instead of all that I want, and a thankful Heart sweeten all my Enjoyments. Let Patience always ease me under my Burden, and an intire Submission to thy Will breed in me a settled Tranquillity of Spirit.

God's WORSHIP.

I. **W**E never set about a more important Work, than when we go to worship God the High and Mighty King of Kings, to beg our Lives of him as condemned Criminals, and entreat infinite Blessings at his Hands.

II. To perform the Service of God in a heedless, negligent and unconcern'd Manner, is to Mock instead of Worshipping him, and to provoke his Wrath, instead of obtaining his Mercy.

III. That Person must be Senseless in spiritual Things that enters into the House of Prayer as into a common House.

IV. We ought to keep a constant Guard upon our Thoughts, Looks and Behaviour, during the whole time of God's Worship; to laugh, talk, gaze about, or sleep is most intolerable Rude and Scandalous.

V. Endeavour always to come to Church before any part of the Service begins, like one that thirsts after God, and longs to appear before him; if we do not this we lose
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the most important Part of it, the Confession of Sin, and so have no Title to the Comfort of Absolution.

VI. Consider that as no devout Prayer goes unrewarded by God, so no trifling or hypocritical Performance of this awful Duty will go unpunish'd.

VII. They that neglect constantly to resort to the Church, and are not diligent Readers of the Holy Scriptures, renounce, if not their Faith; the great Instruments of its Conveyance.

Vouchsafe me, O Lord, the Assistances of thy holy Spirit, to compose my Mind to the most Serious, the most earnest, the most devout and chearful Attention in all Parts of thy Divine Service.

VIII. Piety and Devotion was the great End design'd in the Institution of Holy Days, but now they are distinguish'd only by Vanities and Follies, Excess and Intemperance.

IX. The Feasting Part of the Holy Days the generality of the World take care not only to do, but to over-do, Pleasures and Diversions take up so much of their Time, that they have no Leisure for what is Good, and God is not in all their Thoughts, when in reason he ought to be most there.

Be pleased, O Lord, to sanctifie all my Conversation with others, and all the Employments of this Life, that I may still be Heavenly minded,

ly-minded, and have a Respect to my last End, and everlasting Good.

Charity, and doing Good.

I. **T**O do good is the great Work for the sake of which we were sent into the World; be our Lives otherwise never so busie, if others receive no Benefit by us, we have in effect liv'd idely.

II. The doing good is of all other Services most acceptable to God, it is that, which of all other Qualities, gives us the greatest Resemblance of his Nature.

III. There's no Condition in the World so Mean and Despicable, but yields us some Opportunities of doing good.

IV. Many are ready enough to acknowledge their Obligation, yet are loth to think but that they may be Religious, and serve God without it; but this is certain that Charity, and doing Good, are not Qualities that can be spar'd.

V. The Scripture hath every where declar'd that these Vertues are as necessary in order to our Salvation, as any Condition of the Gospel, *Matth. 25.*

VI. Good Works are the very Soul of Faith, and it is no more alive without 'em, than the Body is without the Spirit.

VII. To the Bodies of our Fellow Christians we do Good when we contribute, either by

by our Purse, our Advice, or our Labour, to relieve and ease them ; and some one of these three none are so inconsiderable, but 'tis in their Power to benefit them by.

VIII. To the Souls of Men they do good, who by their Discourses and other Endeavours make them wiser and better.

IX. 'Tis a very considerable Instance of doing Good (how slight soever it may seem) in those that make use of their Acquaintance and Interest with others, to stir them up to do that, which by reason of the Narrowness of their Condition they cannot do themselves.

X. The being unconcern'd for the Happiness of others must needs be a dangerous Obstruction of our own.

XI. Nothing can be more acceptable to God, than to contribute towards the saving of Souls.

XII. Tho' the World be unequally divided, there's enough to supply the Wants of all the Creatures in it ; for God never intended that the Plenty of some should cause others to starve.

XIII. Our Superfluities are more the Poor's Right, than ours, it being assign'd them by God. the grand Protector.

XIV. We are alike God's Creatures, and are all equally accountable to him ; though we have very different Talents, yet all have
some

some to improve to our Master's Use.

XV. 'Tis a generous Ambition to benefit many, and they only make their Friends Rich and Great, who assist them in their spiritual Concerns.

XVI. In whose Heart soever we can implant a true reverential Awe of God, we sow the Seed of Immortality, of an endless happy Being.

XVII. When we strive to advance the Fame, to increase the Fortune of the Wicked, what do we in it, but enable them to do the more Mischief; by their Wealth to foment their own Luxuries, and by their Reputation commend them to the Practice of others.

O Lord, bless and prosper all our Endeavours to do Good, either to the Souls or Bodies of our Neighbours.

Religious and Corrupt Discourse.

I. **O**UR Tongues are chiefly given us to glorifie God, and magnifie our Maker; and if we neglect religious Discourses, we frustrate God's Design, as much as in us lies, in affording them.

II. We are all Travellers, and our Life is but a Journey to a Place where we are to take up our happy or miserable Abode for ever. Is it not strange that we should not entertain one another about our Journey's End, that a Thing which is so much every bodies Concern

cern should be almost no bodies Discourse?

III. It looks as if Religion had a kind of Imbargo laid upon it, and they were to forfeit some Penalty, if they talk'd of it; were this the Case, I am confident they could not be more silent, and considering the Bent of our Inclinations to what is forbid, I question whether they would be so much.

IV. The Mode and Custom of the World is one of the most engaging and bewitching Things in it, the first that Fools learn, and one of the last that a wise Man can find Courage to despise.

V. *Matth. 5. 16. Let your Light so shine—* which without doubt is as Applicable to good Words, as to good Works, being both alike Exemplary, and alike tending to Edification.

VI. Where's the Difference in this Respect betwixt living in a Desert, and in the World, since Religion is in a manner as little discouraged of in the one, as in the other.

VII. Some that have Religion are ashamed to own it, but keep it as a Fairy-Treasure, as if they were to lose, either that or their Credit, by the Discovery.

VIII. One may make Visit after Visit from House to House, out of one Company into another, for a twelve Month together; and never hear one Word of Religion.

IX. What Subject is there worthy of Discourse, if not that, which is at once our Glory and our Distinction?

X. But as some are said to glory in their Shame, so others are asham'd of their Glory.

XI. But those who have a due Sense of Religion, and a thoro' Zeal for it, will shew it by their Discourse.

XII. It is the principal Character of a good Man not to be conformed to the World, therefore he will not decline the only Subject that's worth talking of.

XIII. We are much the better or worse for those with whom we converse.

XIV. Those that have once found a pious Talker to be an ill Liver, are apt ever after to fancy they are all alike, and will hardly be persuaded to trust a religious Out-side any more.

XV. What St. *Austin* spoke in relation to that Petition in the Lord's Prayer, which so many turn into a Curse to themselves, may be applied to this. Would you say it securely, then do what you say.

XVI. The Rule is short and infallible, practice Religion as much as you talk, and then you have full License to talk as much as you please.

XVII. For in this Age common Conversation alone is enough to corrupt the best among the Heirs of *Adam*. The ordinary Discourses
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of those that go for Innocent are nothing else but Vanity and Pride; they transfuse their Passions, and infect one another, as other diseased Persons do, by their Breath.

XVIII. How few are there, whose ordinary Converse speaks them to be of another World? How short our spiritual Discourses? How quickly diverted to other Things? Sure 'tis our little Communion with God that thus hinders the Communion of Saints.

XIX. Did we truly relish the Delights of God's Service; we should neither refrain from talking of the Pleasures of it; nor be so ill-natur'd, as not to communicate it.

Make me, O Lord, keep a special and strict Watch over my Tongue, on which depends my Spiritual Life or Death, Prov. 18. 21.

RESIGNATION.

I. **E**Xcept a Man be renewed by the Efficacy of the Holy God, he shall not enter into Heaven.

II. Give no rest to your selves till God cause his Spirit (which is the Wind that bloweth where it listeth) to breath spiritual Life into you, without which eternal Life cannot be inherited.

III. When God regenerates us, he subdues our Wills, but doth not compel them; without constraining of it, turning of it as

unforcibly, so infallibly to himself, convinceth us of the Vanity of earthly Things.

IV. God works this Change in our Hearts by our own Endeavours, as well as by his own irresistable and victorious Grace; therefore God calls upon us, *Ezek. 18. 31. Make you a new Heart and a new Spirit, for why will ye die?*

V. *1 John 3. 9. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit Sin;* the same Apostle says, *If we say we have no Sin, we deceive our selves,* the meaning is, that he that is born of God sinneth not in that malignant Manner as the Children of the Devil; *their Spot is not the Spot of Children,* Deut. 32. 5.

VI. The most unerring Test and Tryal, is when we strive with all our might against the Sins of the Heart.

VII. Outward Sins are like Caterpillers, devour the Verdure and Flourishing of Grace; but Heart-sins are like those Worms that gnaw the very Roots of it.

VIII. Christ becomes a Saviour to none, but those in whose Hearts he is first formed: *That which is born of the Spirit is Spirit,* and therefore will long and breath after that which is Spiritual.

IX. Some People's Wishes and Sighs after Goodness vanish away together, and the one makes no more Impression in the Heart and Mind, than the other does in the Air.

X. The

X. The Word of God is the Means of the new Birth, *St. James* 1. —. Take great heed not to drive away the Pangs of the new Birth; Heaven deserves our utmost Care to qualifie us for it.

XI. Happier was the Virgin *Mary* in conceiving Christ in her Soul, than in her Body.

Give me, O Lord, a large and apprehensive Mind; my Soul is a Spirit, O let it delight in Things agreeable to its Nature!

PROVIDENCE.

I. **W**E ought not to concern our selves about the amazing Distributions of Grace or Providence; why one is forsaken and in disfavour with God, another so surprizingly indulged; this Person exercised with Afflictions, or that so gently dealt with, so unaccountably exalted. These are Things out of our Sphere, the acutest Wits are much too short and feeble, to enter into the Reasons of the Divine Counsels; we should content our selves with that general Answer of the Prophet *Jer. 12. 1. Righteous art thou, O Lord, and Just are thy Judgments.* What we cannot comprehend we should not presume to take into Examination.

II. Tho' God has promised Pardon to them that truly repent, yet he hath not promised to Morrow to them that put it off to Day. We
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commonly neglect small Sins, but is it not the same Thing to be oppress'd with a Mountain of Sands, as with a Mill-stone? Sins of Omission, are as unexcusable as Sins of Commission, that Servant is as much in Fault that neglects to do what he is commanded, as he that does what he is forbidden.

III. Who can without Indignation reflect upon the Baseness and Ingratitude of Mankind, who live, and move, and have their Being, in God; know how little they deserve, and feel every Day how many Blessings they receive, and yet have Impudence to reproach Providence.

HEAVEN.

I. **W**E have no exact Description of Heaven in Scripture, and that perhaps because no humane Language can describe it.

II. That which is the prevailing Temper of our Souls in this Life, will doubtless be so in the other too.

III. Peace it self is not desirable, till Repentance has prepar'd us for it.

IV. They that go not out of this World with a good Conscience, must expect a very bad Reception in the other.

THANKSGIVING.

I. **P**ublic Blessings should have Public Thanks: Our Saviour gave Thanks for a few

a few Barly Loaves; but We, ungrateful We, unthankfully receive innumerable Mercies.

II. The most Principal, and most acceptable part of Religion consists in Praise and Thansgiving: The Parable of the Ten *Lepers* is a true Image of Mankind, ten prayed, but one returned Thanks.

III. There is a Greatness in Humane Nature not to be over-aw'd by Death, the Way to be possessed with this Quality to purpose, is to live well; there's no such Bravery as that of a good Christian.

IV. If I am, or do any Thing more than others, no Thanks to me, therefore no Praise; to God alone be all, who is all, and in all, to me.

Lord, let thy Grace accompany all thy Gifts, and so direct me in the Management of them, that they may be useful Instruments of thy Glory, and my Gratitude and Fidelity.

RETIREMENT.

I. **W**Hen we consider the great variety of Humours, the Peevishness of some, the Pride and Conceitedness of others, and the Impertinence of most, I see not wherein the Advantage of Conversation lies.

II. The Inclinations of our blessed Saviour lay more towards the Contemplative Way of Life, though the Interest of Mankind engaged him often upon the Active; in Privacy

he was born, in the Wilderness he fed his Thousands, upon a Mountain apart he was Transfigured.

III. The Satisfactions and Advantages of Solitude (to a Person that knows how to improve it) are very great, far transcending those of a popular Life.

IV. Solitude, which is a Prison, and a Punishment to the Fool and the Sinner, is a Paradise to the Wise and the Good.

V. To be always wandering is the Condition of a Vagabond: Of the two, 'tis better to be a Prisoner at Home, than a Stranger there.

VI. Retirement is not so dreadful a Thing to a Christian as some think it; the Calm and Peace of the Mind is much more desirable, than Noise, and Laughter; and the Quiet, and Regularity of Privacy much to be prefer'd before ill Company: None need complain of Solitude, who can converse with Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles, nay, with God, and his Son Jesus.

O! Thou Son of Righteousness, thou sacred Fountain of Heavenly Light; in thee is all Fullness, from thee is all Sufficiency, by thee is all Acceptance; thou art Company enough, and Comfort enough; rule me, teach me, pray in me, for me, and be thou ever with me.

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